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A METROPOLITAN PARK SYSTEM

[1] Report 1904/05

Report Upon a System of Public Reservations for the Metropolitan District of Providence Plantations

TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
AT ITS JANUARY SESSION

1905

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THE SEEKONK SHORE: A BEND IN THE RIVER ROAD

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF METROPOLITAN PARK COMMISSIONERS

TO THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

AT ITS

JANUARY SESSION, A. D. 1905

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MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION.

The President of the Park Commissioners of Providence.—Dr. Fenner H. Peckham.

The Mayor of Providence.—Hon. Augustus S. Miller.

The Mayor of Pawtucket.—Hon. James H. Higgins.

The Mayor of Central Falls.—Hon. T. H. McNally.

The President of the Town Council of East Providence.—Benjamin Wilson.

The President of the Town Council of Cranston.—Arthur E. Austin.

The President of the Town Council of Warwick.—Walter R. Hazard.

The President of the Town Council of Johnston.—Dr. Ralph H. Shaw.

The President of the Town Council of North Providence.—Michael J. Kirby.

The President of the Town Council of Lincoln.—Alexander Leslie.

The President of Brown University.—Dr. W. H. P. Faunce.

The President of the Chamber of Commerce.—Hon. Frederick H. Jackson.

The President of Providence Art Club.—H. Anthony Dyer.

The Director of the Rhode Island School of Design.—Prof. E. B. Homer.

Members Representing the Public Park Association.—Augustine Jones, Alfred Stone, Amasa M. Eaton, Henry A. Barker, and John R. Freeman.

President.—Dr. Fenner H. Peckham; *Vice-President.*—Alfred Stone; *Secretary.*—Henry A. Barker; *Asst. Secretary.*—Edw. F. Ely.

Executive Committee.—Dr. Fenner H. Peckham, Alfred Stone, Amasa M. Eaton, Henry A. Barker, John R. Freeman; Edward F. Ely (*ex-officio*).

Hon. Albert H. Humes, George W. Parrott, and Dr. E. B. Knight, having been members of the Commission at its organization, by virtue of their offices as mayor of Central Falls, president of the town council of North Providence, and president of the Providence Art Club, respectively, were succeeded by Hon. T. H. McNally, Michael J. Kirby, and H. Anthony Dyer, at the expiration of their terms of office.

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"The life history of humanity has proved nothing more clearly than that crowded populations, if they would live in health and happiness, must have space for air, for light, for exercise, for rest, and for the enjoyment of that peaceful beauty of nature which, because it is the opposite of the noisy ugliness of towns, is so wonderfully refreshing to the tired souls of townspeople."

Charles Eliot, in the Preliminary Report of the Massachusetts Metropolitan Park Commission, 1893.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS.

To the Honorable the General Assembly:

The Board of Metropolitan Park Commissioners presents the following report.

The members of the Board organized by electing Fenner H. Peckham, President; Alfred Stone, Vice-president; Henry A. Barker, Secretary and Treasurer; and Edward F. Ely, Assistant Secretary; and elected, as members of an executive committee, together with the President and Secretary, Messrs. Alfred Stone, Amasa M. Eaton, and John R. Freeman.

The act creating the Board was passed November 16, 1904. Since its organization the Commission has considered the subject carefully, but the short time and the winter weather intervening have not permitted the necessary studies in the field nor more than the preparation of a brief outline of the work proposed, under the act, *i. e.*, the consideration of "the advisability of laying out ample open spaces for the use of the public in Providence and the cities and towns in its vicinity," with authority to make maps and plans and to collect such other information in relation thereto as the Board may deem expedient, and to report to the General Assembly at its January session, 1905.

The Commissioners are satisfied that the time has come when a metropolitan park district should be created and sites acquired for open spaces for recreation and enjoyment.

The improved methods of transportation and increase of rapid transit facilities have done much to extend the built up areas and to unite our scattered towns and cities into closely related parts of a single community extending in a practically uninterrupted settlement to Valley Falls and Lonsdale on the north, and well down into Warwick on the south. As a consequence the metropolitan district of Providence Plantations should include the cities of Providence, Pawtucket, and Central Falls, and the whole or a portion of the adjoining towns of East Providence, Cranston, Warwick, Johnston, North Providence, Lincoln, Barrington, and Cumberland, all of which are served by the system of steam and electric roads centering in Providence.

This district contains more than three hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, or nearly seventy-five per cent. of the population, and three-quarters of the sources of revenue and valuation of the State; and it continues to increase, both in population and in wealth, more rapidly than any other part of Rhode Island. It has doubled in population about once in every twenty-one years throughout the nineteenth century; it has gained more than 1,600 per cent. in one hundred years, and it is reasonable to predict that if the past and present advantages are maintained and preserved it will, in 1935 have a population of nearly a million, and in 1950, it will contain a million and a half inhabitants.

It may therefore be assumed that the State as a whole will be especially interested and united in promoting the welfare of this distinctly metropolitan district,—its main centre of population and wealth,—which contains, as has been stated, about seventy-five per cent. of the population of Rhode Island; a much greater proportion than obtains in any other centre of population in the United States. Greater New York and Greater Boston each comprise only about forty per cent. of the population of their respective States. Since

so large a portion of the people are destined to be city dwellers, to insure vital force they ought to retain the environment of open spaces and natural beauty, the opportunity for which still exists to a marked degree. Fortunately the spaces desired for park reservations are largely the waste places or the least valuable from a commercial point of view, and their condemnation for park purposes will, in many cases, dispose of perplexing and costly problems of street grading, bridges, and sewers.

No suitable map of the proposed metropolitan park district being available on which to outline the suggested reservations, the Board, with the efficient coöperation of the city engineers of Providence and Pawtucket, is having one prepared. Unfortunately this can not be finished in proper accurate form in time to accompany this report. Reference must, therefore, be made to the accompanying roughly drawn sketch map, upon which various suggestions for a Providence Plantations Metropolitan Park System are outlined. The Commission acknowledges its indebtedness to the Public Park Association for this map and for much of the information it has abtained in furtherance of the work of the Commission. The State is indebted to the Park Association for the inception of the movement and for the assistance rendered to this Commission as the result of its investigations, which have been continued for many years, and more especially for the last five years; and is especially indebted to it for this map and for the statistics and information that will be found in the appendix to this report.

This Commission does not, however, print this map as a final determination of its own recommendations. In its general scope and intent it meets with its hearty approval, and it includes the territory that the Commission advises be included in the Providence Plantations Park District. It is, however, only in the summer time that the Commissioners can make a careful personal examination of the ground and can determine, when the trees are in leaf, and after accurate surveys, exactly what locations should be selected as parts of the proposed system. The Commissioners have found that it will

not be possible to acquire much of the requisite land without the power to issue bonds. Under article IV, section 13, of the Constitution, this must be authorized by a vote of the people. The Commission, therefore, submits herewith an act to obtain the requisite authority for the General Assembly to vote to issue bonds from time to time, as it may deem wise, for a total amount not exceeding five hundred thousand dollars, and it respectfully asks the General Assembly to pass this act.

The Commission has not had time to perfect plans for the issue and payment of these bonds. The general scheme in contemplation is that in operation in Massachusetts, in which the State issues the bonds and the cities and towns within the park district reimburse the State by the annual payment into the State treasury of such sums as a Commission to be appointed for that purpose, in terms of five years each, shall find to be just and equitable, in proportion to the benefits that may accrue to them, respectively.

While the State thus lends its credit temporarily to the undertaking, it pays no part of it in the end; and with a sinking fund, in forty years, upon the maturity of the bonds, the whole debt, principal and interest, will be paid, and the metropolitan parks will remain for all time the property of the people.

The Commissioners, therefore, for the reasons herein stated, respectfully request that the Commission be continued and more time be given to prepare a suitable report for presentation at the next session of the General Assembly; and that an additional appropriation of two thousand dollars be made, that the Commissioners may provide plans, clerical assistance, and expert advice on landscape development. To that end the Commission asks the General Assembly to pass the accompanying act.

The lack of a competent body to hold and administer as parts of a comprehensive park system such property as might have been acquired, and the absence of any definite park policy for the district as a whole, have deprived the public of several bequests, and a

number of extremely valuable pieces of property, including a portion of the Seekonk shore, lands on Neutaconkanut Hill, and in other sections, that the owners were ready and willing to donate to the public, or to sell at a merely nominal price, for the purpose of public use.

The expenses incurred by the Commission have been $299.65.

FENNER H. PECKHAM,
ALFRED STONE,
AMASA M. EATON,
HENRY A. BARKER,
JOHN R. FREEMAN,
AUGUSTUS S. MILLER,
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WALTER R. HAZARD,
RALPH H. SHAW,
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W. H. P. FAUNCE,
FRED'K H. JACKSON,
H. ANTHONY DYER,
E. B. HOMER,
AUGUSTINE JONES,

Board of Metropolitan Park Commissioners

CHAPTER —.

AN ACT TO CONTINUE THE METROPOLITAN PARK COMMISSIONERS.

SECTION 1. The metropolitan park commissioners appointed under Chapter 1204 of the Public Laws are hereby continued for the purpose of continuing and completing the duty specified in such chapter.

SEC. 2. Said commission may employ such assistants as it may deem necessary, and may expend not over two thousand dollars therefor and in the discharge of its duties, payable, out of any money not otherwise appropriated, upon the written orders of an executive committee of three persons to be chosen by said commissioners from among their own number. Said commissioners shall receive no compensation.

SEC. 3. The jurisdiction and powers of said commissioners shall extend to and may be exercised in the cities of Providence, Pawtucket, and Central Falls; the towns of East Providence, Cranston, Warwick, Johnston, North Providence, Lincoln, Barrington, and the voting districts Nos. 3, 4, and 5 in the town of Cumberland, which cities, towns, and voting districts shall constitute the Metropolitan Park District of Providence Plantations.

CHAPTER —.

AN ACT TO SUBMIT TO THE ELECTORS A PROPOSITION FOR THE ISSUE OF METROPOLITAN PARK BONDS.

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

SECTION 1. The following proposition shall be submitted to the people for their approval or rejection at the general election to be held on
in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 731 of the Public Laws passed March 29, 1889:

"STATE LOAN.

"Shall the general assembly be authorized and directed to provide for the issue of state bonds in an amount not to exceed the sum of five hundred thousand dollars, so much of said sum as may be necessary to be applied to the acquirement and maintenance of open spaces for public park purposes in the metropolitan park district, consisting of the cities of Providence, Pawtucket, and Central Falls, and the towns of East Providence, Cranston, Warwick, Johnston, North Providence, Lincoln, Barrington, and the voting districts Nos. 3, 4, and 5 in the town of Cumberland?"

A METROPOLITAN PARK SYSTEM

AS PROPOSED BY THE PUBLIC PARK ASSOCIATION.

To the Metropolitan Park Commission:

GENTLEMEN:—At your request, I beg to submit the following outline of a metropolitan park system for the populous district of "Providence Plantations," together with some considerations as to the reasons why it should be provided.

Although a first hasty glance at the map may give to some an impression that a formidable undertaking is here presented, no very costly project is proposed. The enterprise is in no way more extensive than the similar ones already undertaken by a majority of the large cities, and it provides no more than is demanded for the well-being of our people a single generation hence. The volunteer laborers of the Park Association can claim no originality in the presentation of this work. During recent years the splendid experiments of other American cities have fully demonstrated in their beneficial results the wisdom of those who were pioneers in the art and science of city building. Such men as Charles Elliot, the Olmsteds, Sylvester Baxter, George A. Parker, and Charles Mulford Robinson, have performed a public service extending far beyond those cities to which their work has been especially devoted.

The time has come when such studies as the members of the Park Association have made should be supplemented and developed in detail. This may be effectively done through the valuable service of the members of a commission properly representing the various

parts of the metropolitan district and with the advice and coöperation of expert authorities who have had to do with similar projects that have become successful realities elsewhere.

The Metropolitan District a Unit.

The area indicated upon the accompanying sketch map is almost wholly within the zone of the five-cent car fare from Exchange place. Henceforth, its proper development demands that it shall be considered as a unit in all the larger things that must be provided for great and growing cities. Especially in the matter of public reservations and pleasure grounds the trend of population and the common needs must be considered rather than the artificial and accidental boundary lines, for in its physical arrangement this area is the natural site of a single great city.

Since the introduction of rapid transit the zone of settlement has rapidly extended to limits that have been fixed almost wholly by the ease and cheapness of communication with that centre. In the future a proportionate extension is unlikely. The tendency will be to fill this area much more closely. The population which has heretofore extended "along the lines of least resistance" in the valleys and level lands, and has enjoyed the benefits of free breathing places and recreation facilities afforded by the steeper hillsides and the shores of the numerous waterways, will rapidly destroy them for their former use.

The Destruction of Natural Advantages.

As these places will be the cheapest because the least adapted for commercial uses, we may be sure that the scenes that now are fairest and the places that are most picturesque will become occupied by the things that are the meanest and the shabbiest in the city's growth. The little rivers will have become pestilence bearers or open sewers like the lower Moshassuck. The fragments of ponds remaining unfilled will be nuisances to all their surrounding neighborhoods, as is Long pond to-day. The steep and rocky hillsides will present

everlasting problems of street construction and public service; the drainage of the lowlands will be ever troublesome.

1. A Little River in a City.

"The steadily increasing pollution has made it obnoxious to the adjacent communities. The contempt or dislike generated by such a condition is very different from the respect shown for the stream in the earlier days. One observes all sorts of ugly growths and developments upon the shores. Land has been cheapened in consequence. Ugly outbuildings, shanties, rubbish heaps, etc., disfigure the banks. Excrescences and scars mar the landscape."—(*Sylvester Baxter in Metropolitan Park Report.*) This applies to the Pawtuxet, the Pocasset, Ten Mile, Moshassuck, Woonasquatucket, etc.

Parks or Slums?

The site upon which this Greater Providence is being built offers the choice of a city grandly beautiful and picturesque, or one shockingly ugly and ill-arranged. It must needs be developed logically and artistically instead of accidentally and whimsically.

A Splendid City Site.

The founder of Providence wisely chose a place for his settlement fair to look upon and good to live in. Yet it is doubtful if many of its people have ever fully realized its attractions. Some of these may be reached only by weary journeys. Some are almost inaccessible, and some

are wholly so. A dismal uninviting district may cut off from development a whole section of the city beyond, as the Fruit Hill district has long been cut off from the centre of the city. One ruth-

2. Across the Dumping Grounds.—Site of Proposed Capitol Avenue.

The Back Bay district of Boston once resembled this region. The value of the Back Bay lands after the establishment of the park and street improvements "trebled in thirteen years, while the valuation of the rest of the city increased only eighteen per cent. The increased taxes on this land aggregated over two millions of dollars. The taxes on new buildings yield one and a half millions more."—*Report of Boston Park Commission.*

less woodchopper may lessen the delights of a river miles long upon which thousands of people could otherwise find happiness and health and delight. Unfortunately the citizens themselves have usually been slow to adapt themselves to new conditions. It was only a third of a century ago that the public water was turned on. Wells and streams had served for a small town, and many citizens could not understand why they should not always do so. It was the same with the sewers, and the superb system of Providence was started none too soon.

The improvement of the harbor and the establishment of an ade-

quate system of parks and public grounds are the two great enterprises that should command our attention next, and the beginning upon plans big enough for half a century should not be long deferred. The latter project is the one that will suffer mostly by delay, for the harbor will not disappear from the map as the parklands will.

Two Necessary Enterprises.

As a measure of economy quite as much as for æsthetic reasons, it is evidently desirable that we begin immediately to lay plans for the development of these "Providence Plantations" of the future. It would have been worth millions to us if our ancestors had comprehended the needs of the present day. As it is, the interest and expensive changes and street improvements use up a goodly portion of our resources each year.

Economy of Foresight.

There are active men yet living who remember when Providence was a village and cows roamed over the stubby meadows from Stewart street to Pawtuxet, interrupted only by a few stone walls and rail fences, and when New York was a smaller town than Providence is to-day. Even when Betsey Williams gave her farm to the people they hesitated in its acceptance because it was "so far beyond any possible use." At that time there were only about 90,000 people living within ten miles of the city hall, where it appears there are now more than 360,000. The Providence of a few years hence will be thickly spread from Greenwich bay to the great bend of the Blackstone river, and for several miles each side of our main waterway. Whether the city limits shall be extended or not, it is bound to be, as it even now is, practically one great community.

The Growth of the District.

The boys of a few years ago were surrounded by fields and woods within easy walking distance on every hand. Where are they now, those playgrounds of the people? Where are the commons where "one old cat" and juvenile football allured the boys after school was over? The open lots are either built up or fenced in with hideous billboards—"No trespass" signs warn off invaders. The children

may play in crowded streets when they can elude the vigilance of the policeman, though some of the wealthy ones have yards big enough to play puss-in-the-corner in when the gardener is away.

3. MASHAPAUG.

A magnificent lake which can be permanently preserved for public health and enjoyment by the control of a very narrow strip of land along the shore. An avenue bordering this strip would provide fine residence sites with a splendid outlook forever. The misuse of any portion of the shore will pollute the whole lake and also the lake at Roger Williams Park, and injure the value of many hundred neighboring acres.

Oases in the Desert.

If you would drive out to scenes of rural enjoyment, you must travel over city streets—generally rather dismal ones—until you are weary. Yet places of beauty still remain as oases in the desert of houses, and their preservation means more than we can realize to the character of the people. It also means much industrially, especially to a community like our own.

Without fresh air and happy surroundings, the two greatest factors for efficiency of labor and a contented people, the industries of Providence, now pre-eminent in those directions that call for skill and art

of the workers, would inevitably decline. It surely means everything to the health and moral welfare.*

Despoiled of its open places, the city, or collection of cities, could have no attraction for any one who could possibly escape from the

4. LONG POND. — A MELANCHOLY FRAGMENT AND A PUBLIC NUISANCE.

During the score of years that the filling has gone on, a once attractive neighborhood has suffered from arrested development. The valuation of a very large district has decreased. The character of all the surrounding neighborhood has permanently deteriorated.

region. Such conditions would be inconceivable and intolerable while all the other large cities of the country provided the attractions that were lacking here. (See diagram 3.) Like New York with its

---

Lack of Parks Breeds Crime and Disease.

*Diagrams recently compiled in Chicago show conclusively how squalor, degradation, crime, and infant mortality increase in their ratio, just as the distance increases from the park lands, and how "the prevention of disease and juvenile crime with its effect upon adult citizenship follows the establishment of accessible pleasure grounds."

Mulberry Bend and Seward Park, which cost nearly a million dollars an acre, we might tear down the rows of tenements and slums that had sprung into being in the places that once were beautiful and valuable public assets, but no art or money could ever quite restore them to their present condition of usefulness.

A Parkless City.

Utilizing the Waste Places.

The map shows that the proposed park lands are for the most part the present waste places of the district. A rocky hillside or a deep ravine through which a stream flows; a craggy summit commanding a view for miles around; a swamp that needs but little care to fit it for the growth of horticultural treasures;—these are the places that, if secured for public use and gradually improved in conformity with a well-digested, coherent plan, become things of beauty and joys forever to untold generations.

The ease and cheapness of utilizing these natural features, which so many cities must spend great sums of money to imitate,* is shown by the fact that in all the parklands shown upon the map, together with the necessary connecting parkways and drives, there are altogether less than one hundred acres of land that possesses average value, not over one hundred buildings that require removal.

The settlement has been developed in a hit-or-miss sort of a way. Our streets are mostly the glorified cowpaths of our ancestors' time. They are discouragingly narrow and getting more and more crowded and inadequate every day, and in the suburbs the new streets are not being provided on any better plan.

Accidental Development.

It was not until 1893 that the Metropolitan Park Commission of

*Chicago, for example, being dissatisfied with the monotonous regularity of her lake front is now seriously proposing to change about ten miles of its length by constructing a series of peninsulas with intervening bays, and some large islands more than two miles out from its present shore. "Chicago," says the official report, "should acquire a bay or harbor enclosed by islands. It should and can be made more like Portland, Boston, and New York."

Greater Boston set about its labors. Now, behold the magnificent metropolitan park system, unexcelled by that of any other city in the world; the grandest bequest of the century to the Boston of all the future. Here, as in Boston, since any comprehensive parkway plan must of necessity extend beyond the limits of one city, there must be a metropolitan park district established by the legislature, under the joint management of the State and all the towns and cities interested.

Metropolitan Park System of Massachusetts.

In Boston the conditions had grown more complicated and costly than they would now be here. The principal expense was in establishing the connecting links—here easily provided. The Bostonians were pioneers along unbeaten paths. We have the benefit of all their experience and experiments and mistakes. Had their work been undertaken when the Massachusetts district was no more populous than the Rhode Island district now is, the cost could not have been a quarter as great as it has been. Yet it was worth many times its cost, and it has paid for itself already.

Why the Boston System was Costly.

Some time ago a committee of the Public Park Association was appointed to prepare a report upon a system of parks and parkways for this metropolitan district and to consider the various tracts of land which, for any especial reason, ought to be acquired. After much study it prepared an outline of such a system, accompanied by about thirty plats in continuous series on a scale sufficiently large to indicate the contour and natural features of the lands, the buildings, and many other details helpful to an understanding of the subject.

The Park Association Report.

The general plan proposed provides for a series of wide boulevards, well planted with trees and hardy shrubs, extending from the centre of Providence to the encircling ring of the proposed parkway system, which shall include the chief features of natural interest from the shore of the bay below Pawtuxet and Riverside, around the city

The General Plan.

to the most west and north, and inclosing Pawtucket and Central Falls.

Such a plan suggests possibilities to public spirited citizens who will be stimulated by it to leave behind them the most permanent of all memorials in contributing to its completion.

Useful Features. It provides opportunities for enjoyment to the laboring man and his family unsurpassed by any that the riches of the millionaire can secure. It attracts visitors. It draws a leisure class of æsthetic tastes that raises the character of the community by its presence. And it is certainly a matter of economy. Most of the desirable places are much more cheaply treated as parks and reservations than they can be in any other way. Experience everywhere goes to show that well-selected parks are almost invariably a good financial investment.

The need of many of the suggested connecting drives will be generally recognized.

The Connecting Avenues. In most cases alternative routes have been suggested, in which the ultimate decision would rest largely with the property owners whose estates would be most directly improved. In general they are intended to follow the natural contour of the ground and to avoid costly cuts and fills by curves which, without sacrificing much of directness, shall add greatly to their beauty and variety. Such boulevards as Beacon avenue or the Newton boulevard in the Boston district are suggested as models rather than the roadbeds of a railroad. Most of the avenues proposed have incidental value for local transportation or lead conveniently and pleasantly from the population centres to the outlying system of State roads.

The inner ring of these proposed parkways is about eighteen miles in extent, while the circuits enclosing Pawtucket on the north and traversing the Pawtuxet Valley on the south would add perhaps twenty miles more.

They would develop much real estate and provide many miles of splendid sites for the builders of fine residences who now have great difficulty in finding any street of guaranteed future attractiveness

in the whole metropolitan district; for be it known to our shame, that, unlike most cities, this whole district possesses not one street that is continuously elegant a single mile of its length.

Especially would these avenues provide for the unifying of the street system—if it can be claimed that we have any street system—by connecting the dead ends of the platted streets that lead from the older thoroughfares towards the edges of bluffs or the shores of waterways. As these latter places, wherever they appear especially broken or irregular in their contour, are generally recommended for reservation, it is intended that drives should be arranged along their outer boundaries,—for example, following in a general way parallel with the shore lines of the bay or of rivers like the Pawtuxet; or curving along the flat tops of steep-sided bluffs such as overlook the Woonasquatucket valley. (See illustration No. 9.) As a result, the building lots on the opposite sides of such avenues, with an open outlook forever assured over attractive scenes of public reservations, will possess a grandeur and a character quite unknown to any of our existing streets. The cross streets that would terminate on these boulevards instead of at some jumping off place, would become most valuable in the parts that otherwise would be most worthless. As the map shows but very few of the platted streets, it fails to indicate most of the cases where great benefit would be conferred upon the property values of the districts along the many miles of water shores and ravine edges.

The Parks near the People.

The system of parks suggested divides itself into four principal sections. The map shows clearly that no long journey would be necessary to reach some part or other of the park system from any given point.

OUTLINE OF THE PROPOSED SYSTEM.

Exchange place is taken as the centre, and it appears that the one pleasant route to the suburbs that may yet be provided is by way of Davis Park. In all other directions the streets are closely built and narrow.

From Exchange place, or from nearby streets, are trolley cars running upon routes rivalling in number the varieties of table delicacies advertised by the most ambitious manufacturers, reaching nearly all the people of the State and several hundred thousand people in the two adjoining States. The steam trains at the Union station nearby are daily patronized by something over twenty-five thousand local and suburban passengers. A splendid "civic centre" is being created here, and broad open spaces surrounded by fine public buildings will give this main portal of the city much distinction.

The Great Portal of the State.

It is to be expected that the properties of the State, the nation, and the railroad company, together with the cove land, recently dedicated by the city of Providence as the "Public Garden," may be harmonized in a worthy and artistic treatment.

From a point in the rear of the Union station two ways of reaching Davis Park are suggested, both so easily feasible that both should

5. THE LOWER WOONASQUATUCKET AS IT IS.

"Every great city will be tested in the future by its manner of treating its rivers. The Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck run through the heart of the town. They are for the most part neglected streams, muddy and filth laden."—*Prov. Journal Editorial.*

be provided. Through the valley a dismal district but sparsely occupied, and shabby and repulsive in the extreme, extends like a great wedge into the city's centre. The Woonasquatucket river runs between muddy and rubbish-covered banks through most of this long wedge-like area. (See illustration No. 5.) Promenade street and Kinsley avenue are already laid out and furnish the possibility of a splendid boulevard, two hundred feet wide, right from the centre of the town, that will reach the great Olneyville district by the most direct and level route. Near the bend of the river, just west of the cold-storage warehouses, a parkway extended a short distance across the present unoccupied dumping grounds would reach Davis

Woonasquatucket Avenue to Davis Park.

6. THE WOONASQUATUCKET AS IT OUGHT TO BE.

"The Woonasquatucket, especially, would respond to enlightened treatment. Trees should be planted without delay and plans adopted whereby the locality can be saved from the activity of the ash dumper and the shanty builder and eventually become the centre of the city beautiful."—*Prov. Journal Editorial.*

The largest unbuilt area in the city is just beyond, and demands a proper approach.

Park at its southeastern corner. Four lines of trees and the proper treatment of the river edges would make a beautiful thoroughfare. The distance from city hall to Davis mansion in Davis Park is six thousand nine hundred feet, or about one and one-third miles. There is another way which we will call "Capitol avenue" (see illustration No. 2) that starts from Francis street, with the dome of the beautiful State building at the end of the avenue, even as the dome of the national capitol looks down upon the avenues of Washington, and extends along the present line of West Park street out across the unoccupied lands to Davis Park.

Capitol Avenue.

The future of all the great northwest district, including Fruit Hill and Mount Pleasant, depends upon a proper approach, and the increase in valuation of a vast undeveloped area would surely result by extending these proposed avenues through the park or along its eastern edge to reach Chalkstone avenue, Smith street, and Eaton street.

THE SOUTHERN CIRCUIT.

Leaving Davis Park by its western entrance the way leads along Regent avenue widened, or by an alternative route nearer the edge of the busy Woonasquatucket Valley nearly a hundred feet below. Beyond Harold street the sides of this bluff are now heavily wooded, and the streets should be laid out to follow the natural conformation of the land. At the corner of Cliff street we turn to the west around the end of Kepler street, across Academy avenue, beside the grammar school, and continue up Mount Pleasant to its highest point, known as Sky High hill. Here is a large grove surrounded by a tenement house district and crowned by a great rock. It is the site of the often proposed Adie Park. The rock is of much geological interest, for upon its sides are written "the history of thirty thousand years."

Crossing Atwell's avenue at the junction of Manton avenue and

7. Mt. Pleasant. The Edge and the Summit.

A. The edge of the bluff between Harold street and Academy avenue.
In such cases "a boundary road should be constructed along the edge, between the steep land which should be used for park purposes, and the flatter upland which should be occupied for residences facing the park."—*F. L. Olmsted in Baltimore Met. Park Report.*

B. A neighborhood playground on Sky High Hill.
Where will the children of these children play?

C. The Rock on Sky High Hill—a record of the Great Glacier.

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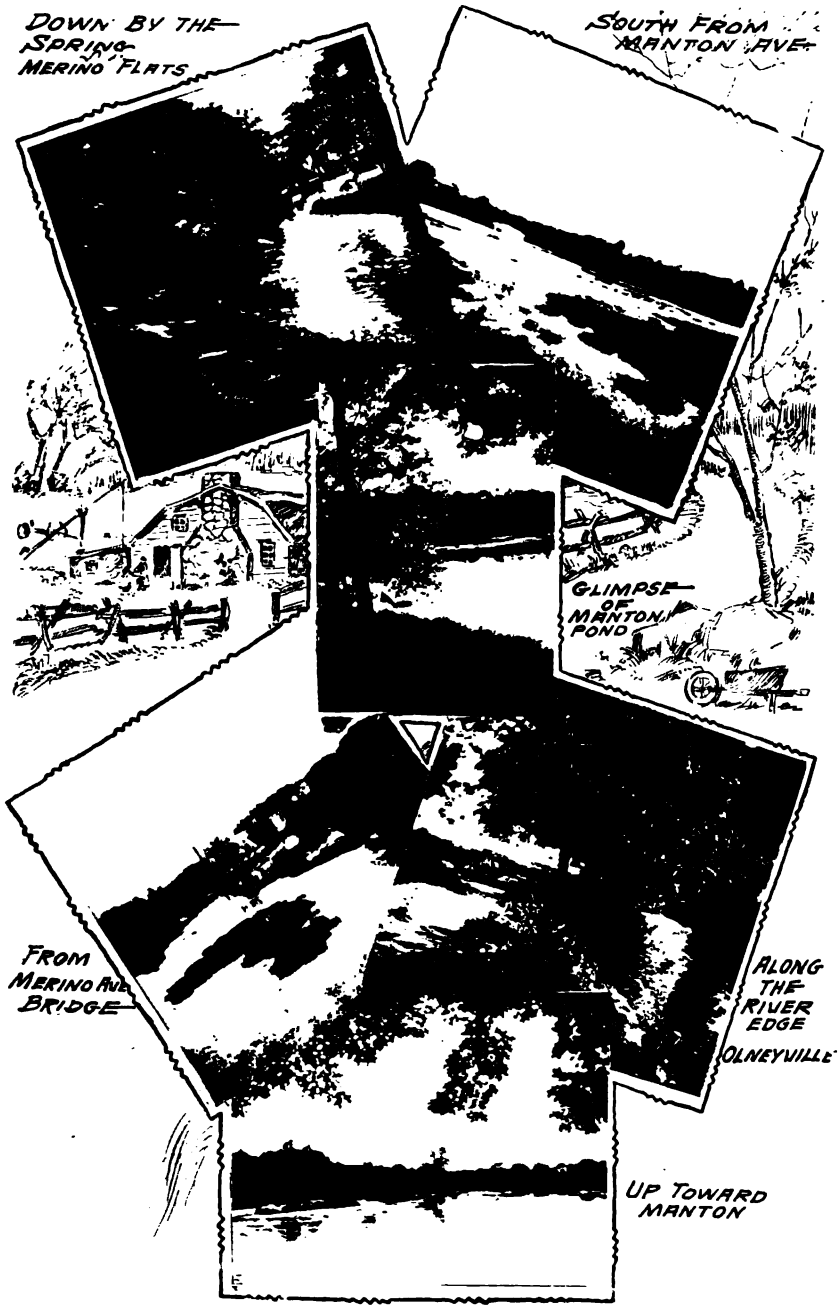

8. MERINO FLATS AND THE WOONASQUATUCKET VALLEY. A NATURAL PARK.

"The natural flood channel must be kept free from obstructions, but its banks will be occupied by stables and backyards unless the city lays out a border of park which will preserve its beauty as a public asset."

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9. NEUTACONKANUT HILL.

"It would have had a castle on it years ago had it been in the old countries and in feudal lands."

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curving around the bluff, we cross the Woonasquatucket river by the new bridge at Merino avenue, then continue over the lowlands from Hartford avenue to the new Neutaconkanut Park. The steep hillsides along the picturesque Woonasquatucket and the broad valley known as Merino Flats, long the playground and meeting place of thousands of Olneyville's mill population, are here included in the plan, which should take as much as possible of the shore as far as the Manton bridge. No more useful and necessary place for a park in the whole district is to be found, and no other private property has been more extensively used as such in the past. The precipitous hillsides and the attractive lowlands, subject to occasional overflow of the river, are of but little commercial value and need but slight outlay to improve them for the purpose they have long served so admirably, but their withdrawal from public use would be a serious calamity.

The Woonasquatucket and Merino Flats.

The present Neutaconkanut Park does not, unfortunately, as yet include any of the southern and highest summit. From the part already secured is a fine view of Providence. The best part of the hill is beyond the city limits and its acquisition requires the agency of a metropolitan commission. From the southern summit, near the great boulder, a magnificent view extends over the valleys of Cranston and Warwick to the shores of Greenwich bay, past Potowomut and out through the west passage of Narragansett bay toward the sea. To the east is Fall River on its distant hill, and nearer, the spires of Bristol and Warren. At our feet, in the foreground, the great bend of the Pocasset river encloses Dyer's nursery and Pocasset cemetery. A curving road to the summit, a few paths and shelters from storms, and the easy alteration of a little swamp into a permanent lake, are about all that is desirable in the way of present improvements for this magnificent hill. Its noble rocky outlines and its pleasant groves, full of the characteristic shrubbery in which Rhode Island is so richly favored, should be left about as they are.

Neutaconkanut Hill.

Dyer's Nursery and the Pocasset Valley.

Descending the hill and crossing Plainfield street, the Pocasset Valley is reached. The extensive marshlands over which this valley spreads in the spring would make a splendid public reservation. To confine the river between costly walls and to reclaim these lowlands would destroy a landscape of surpassing beauty. With this river, as with the other small rivers, we find the example of Boston's Fenway most instructive as an economical and charming expedient to meet troublesome engineering difficulties. We must note the splendid opportunities for boating upon this curving river that connects four beautiful ponds and gives us a course,—now over broad waters, and again through winding channels,—of nearly four miles, from Randall's Pond to the Print Works pond in Cranston. Dyer's nursery is a most desirable acquisition for park purposes. The beauty of its natural situation and splendid results of artistic cultivation, well fit it for a public garden and arboretum.

Manufacturing Interests in Harmony with Park Control.

Right here it may be remarked that the vested rights of water power that have caused many manufacturing companies to seek control of the streams need not be interfered with in any way by the acquisition for park purposes of the stream valleys above the mills. Such control should be welcomed by the manufacturers when proper agreements have been entered into that will guarantee them the permanent protection of an unpolluted water supply.

Mashapaug and Spectacle Ponds.

Leaving the Pocasset river, we have a choice of desirable routes over Laurel or Rocky Hill, one crossing directly over the lower slopes of the hill near the Chestnut Grove Casino, and the other, more charming, though less direct, leading along the top of the cliff at the edge of the ledges. Beyond Cranston street is Spectacle pond, the beautiful Lake of the Isles, as it may well be called, and the proposed Lake of Isles road extends around it in either direction. The recreation value of this lake, with its beautiful little isles, will be evident

10. Neutaconkanut Hill.—Looking South over Pocasset Valley.

"The view from its summit of cities, country, wooded valleys, and shining sea is far reaching and grand."

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11. Pocasset River Group.

A picturesque valley that needs but preservation as it is. The land is unavailable for building without enormous expense.

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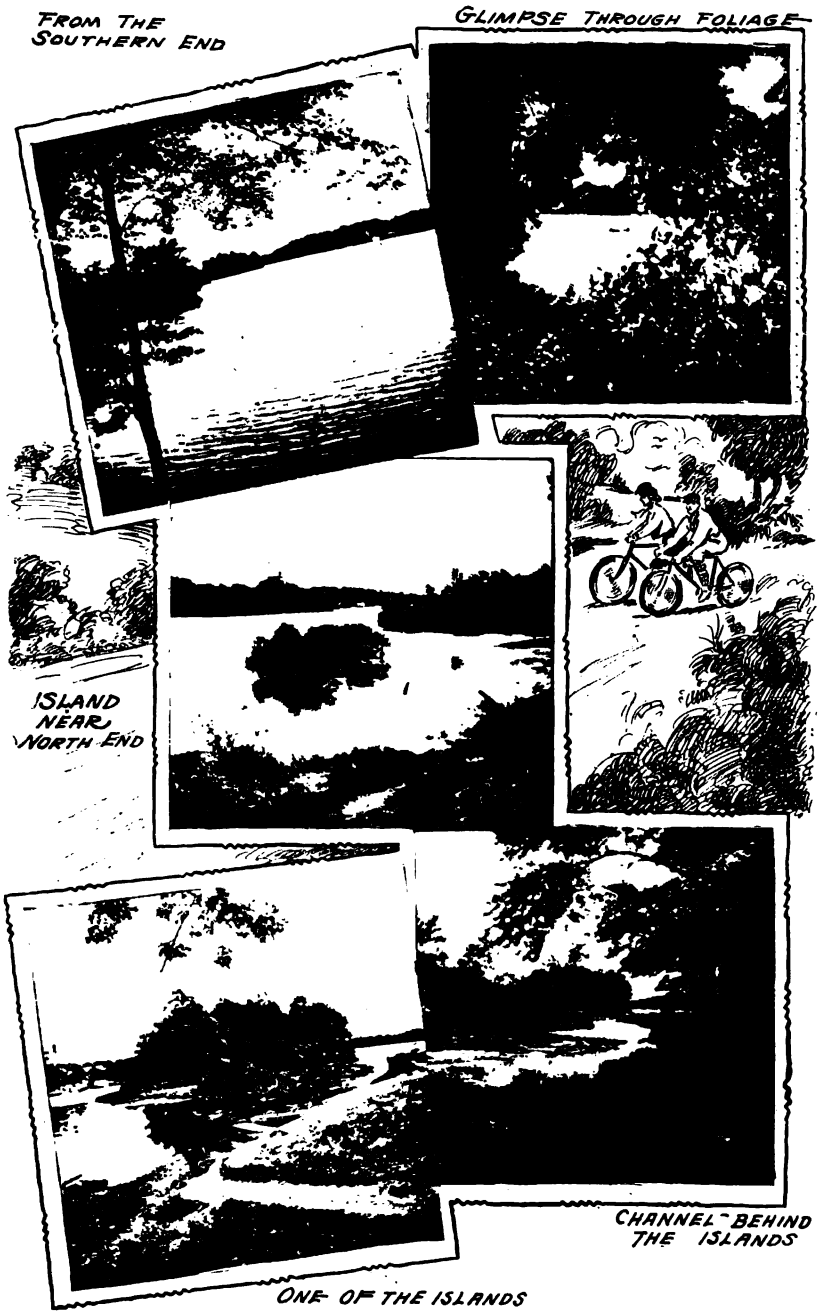

12. Spectacle Pond. "The Lake of Isles."

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13. MASHAPAUG.

A Splendid Lake near Elmwood.

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to anyone who may visit it on a pleasant Sunday in summer, and it is already much enjoyed by the dwellers in the neighborhood.

Now we come to Mashapaug, the largest body of fresh water in Providence. Mashapaug and Spectacle ponds are on the same level, and the connecting waterway might easily afford passage for rowboats and launches and give a chance for a round trip of a little over four miles. The preservation of these lakes and their surrounding watershed is necessary to the lake of Roger Williams Park, which receives its water supply from them, and it is essential to the health of the neighborhood that they be not polluted by dumping or the crowding of buildings on their shores. The possibilities of this water park are of especial interest to the Elmwood district of Providence and a large portion of Cranston.

From Mashapaug to Roger Williams Park.

Eastward beyond Reservoir avenue are fragments of old earthworks erected in 1812. They are a part of the system that once extended from Fort Independence, at Field's Point, to Mashapaug. Just over the edge of the bank is a beautiful piece of unspoiled woodland with a quiet little pool, which one might imagine to be in the heart of a mighty wilderness, though it is only a few hundred feet from Elmwood avenue and the great car station. From Elmwood avenue to Broad street we may pass through Roger Williams Park; and then, by moving three houses near the Broad street entrance, the way is clear for a boulevard to Field's Point and Sassafras Hill—apparently designed by nature for a splendid marine park. Providence owns much of the land and has very extensive engineering works located here. Fort Independence, located on the highest hill, is unfortunately outside of the municipal domain. It commands a glorious panorama to the south, of bay and islands, and on the north, of the busy harbor and the encircling structures of a great city. Its interesting history tells of the troublous times of the Revolution, when the men of Providence assembled day by day to work upon the fortifications that should protect them from the advancing enemy.

Some time, perhaps, a high level bridge will be built across the nar-

row channel to the East Providence shore or a ferry established, saving many miles to the traveller on his way to Barrington, Warren, and Bristol.

East Providence Shore.

Across the river the parkway system crosses the narrow part of Watchemoket Cove and extends north along the line of Vue de l'Eau avenue to Fort Hill. The view from the wooded bluff is rather inspiring; at sunset it is extremely beautiful, and a promenade along the edge of the high bluff, at this time easily provided, would be a most valuable feature in a region now in much peril of becoming an unrelieved and dreary desert of cheap houses..

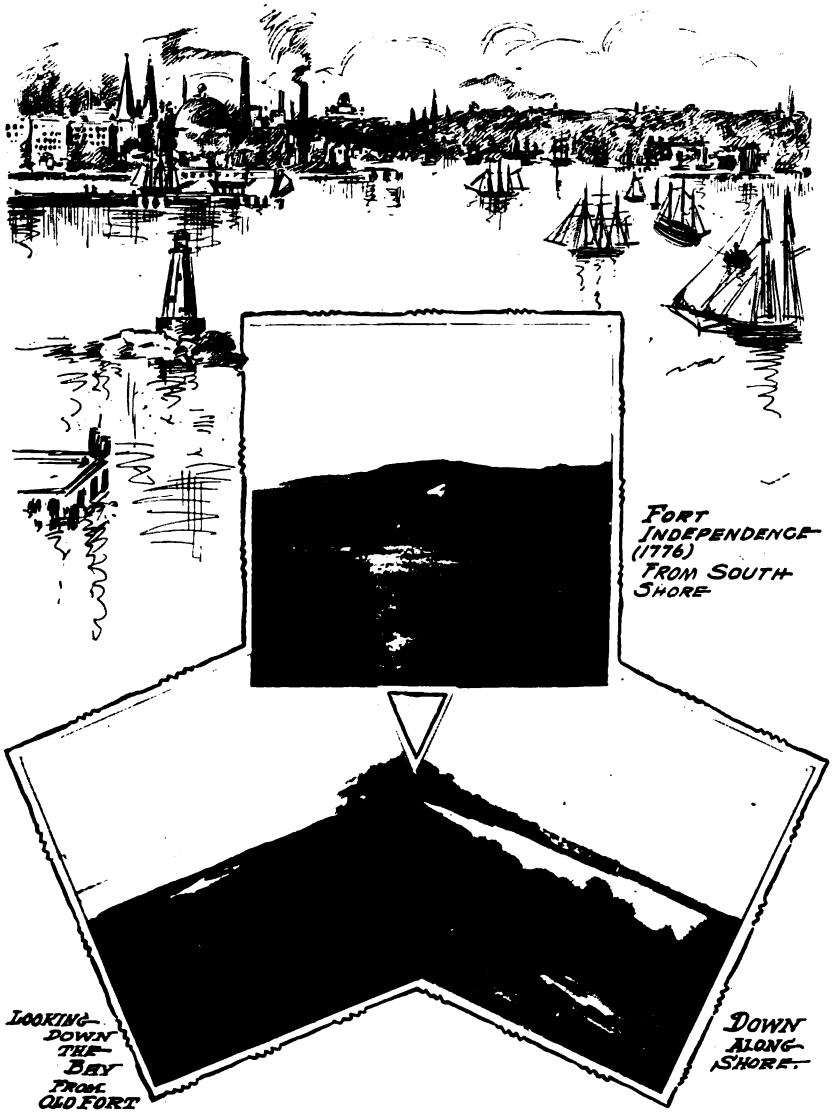
The park system may be continued by way of Second street, widened through the centre of Watchemoket, and by Brow street, as it exists upon the map, from Taunton avenue near Washington bridge, to Waterman avenue at Red bridge.

On the west side of the lower Seekonk basin a more attractive avenue should be made by widening the dismal Gano street from Tockwotten street past Slate Rock and Roger Williams square, and curving around the top of the steep bluff into Pitman street and the southern end of Blackstone Park. A retaining wall and a terrace here would provide for a sort of esplanade above the river, effectually separating the residential district of the beautiful "East Side" from the wharves that will be built along the water front. It is evident that some such separation must be provided or history will repeat itself—the pleasant residence districts of the East Side lose their value and charms by the gradual encroachment of such enterprises as are always crawling up the streets leading from the harbor edge.

From Tockwotten Street to Red Bridge.

THE SEEKONK BASIN AND THE PROPOSED DAM.

There may, somewhere in the world, be a grander opportunity for a splendid water park than is afforded by the broad estuary of the Seekonk, but the writer is unaware of its existence. Surely the list of leading American cities shows no possibility comparable with this basin in the beauty of its shores and its nearness to the people who



14. Fields Point and Fort Independence.

A marine park with fortifications built during the Revolution.

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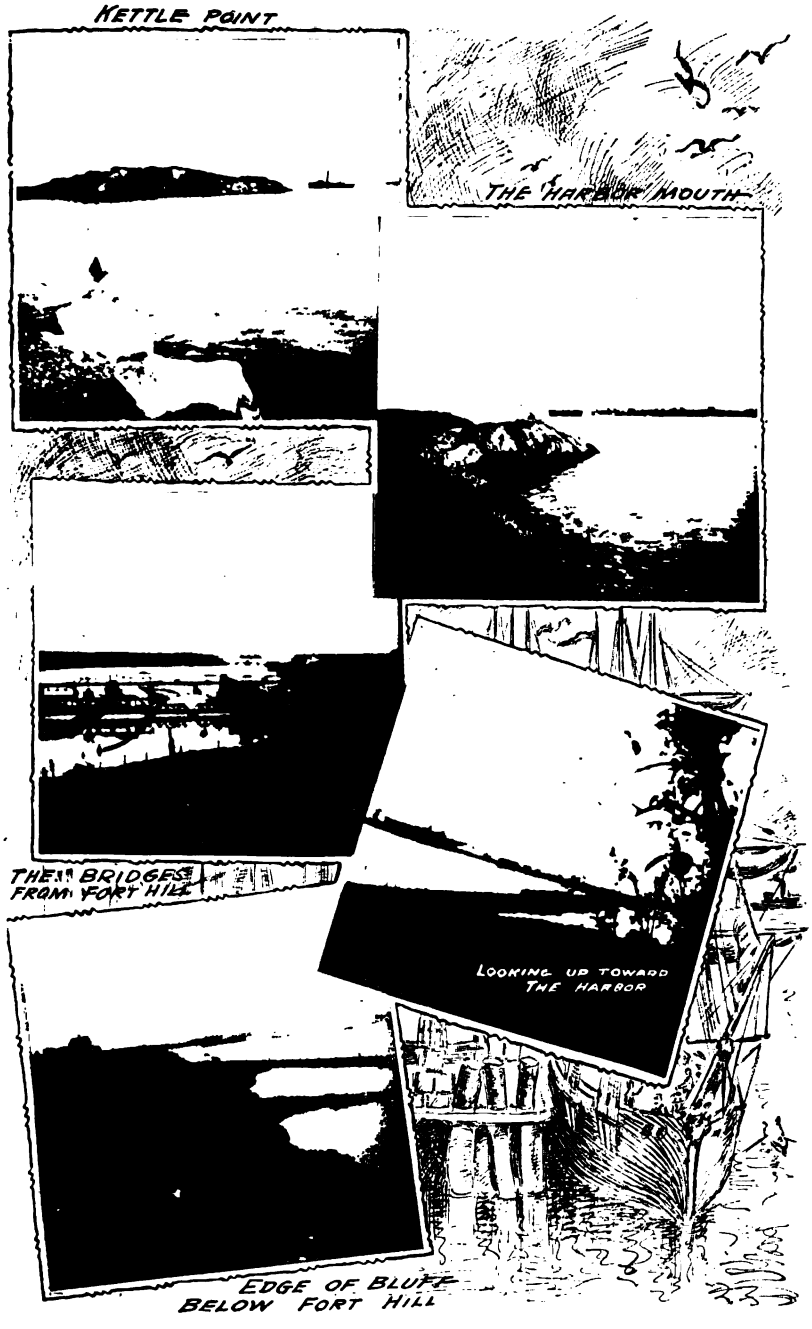

15. THE WATCHEMOKET SHORE.

The steep bluff beyond Fort Hill looks down upon the upper harbor. The edge should be reserved for a public promenade. An avenue just behind would furnish the shortest route to the whole southeastern section of the state.

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should use and enjoy it. It has been compared in a general way for size and situation to the Charles River Basin between Boston and Cambridge, and to the Alster Basin at Hamburg. Both of these are estuaries connecting with the harbors of the cities, as the Seekonk does with the harbor at Providence. All three of them are used to some extent for light commerce, and into all of them run fresh water rivers. The Alster Basin is the feature that gives the principal character to Hamburg. Its shores are beautifully improved and have become the fashionable promenade of the city, while its surface furnishes in the summer a brilliant aquatic spectacle, and in the winter a scarcely less attractive scene upon the ice. By the building of a dam, which has converted it into a fresh water lake, its whole character has been changed; its water level has been fixed; and the possibility given for a treatment of its shores impossible so long as the falling tide exposed its flats and muddy edges. Previous to this alteration the neighboring parts of Hamburg were among the least attractive portions of the city. Now they are the most beautiful.

The Alster Basin.

A similar improvement is to be undertaken with the Boston river. The old Cragie bridge required replacing by some wider structure, and it was found that a dam with the necessary lock and sluiceway could be built at less cost than a modern steel bridge. Such a dam, made in the form of a wide causeway, with its edges planted with trees and otherwise adorned, makes possible a beautiful avenue and at the same time brings to all the districts surrounding the shores of the basin above it the same great benefits that have come to Hamburg.

The Charles River Dam.

An elaborate series of scientific investigations bearing upon the problems of health and drainage; of the effect upon temperature and the quality of the water; the results to the harbor and all the other questions involved, seems to have demonstrated for all time and for all similar cases the thorough wisdom of such action. As a result of the Boston experiments and studies we hear of projects of similar character being

Benefits Derived.

proposed in other places, notably at the mouth of the Thames, near London, where such a dam is primarily desired for the resulting benefit to navigation. Vessels of deep draught would thus be permitted to sail freely as far as London bridge instead of waiting for the rising tide to allow them even to get to Tilbury, many miles below. Similarly, the building of a dam at the narrow mouth of the Seekonk—a project much cheaper than the Boston one since the distance is less than half as great and the water but half as deep—

Aid to Navigation.

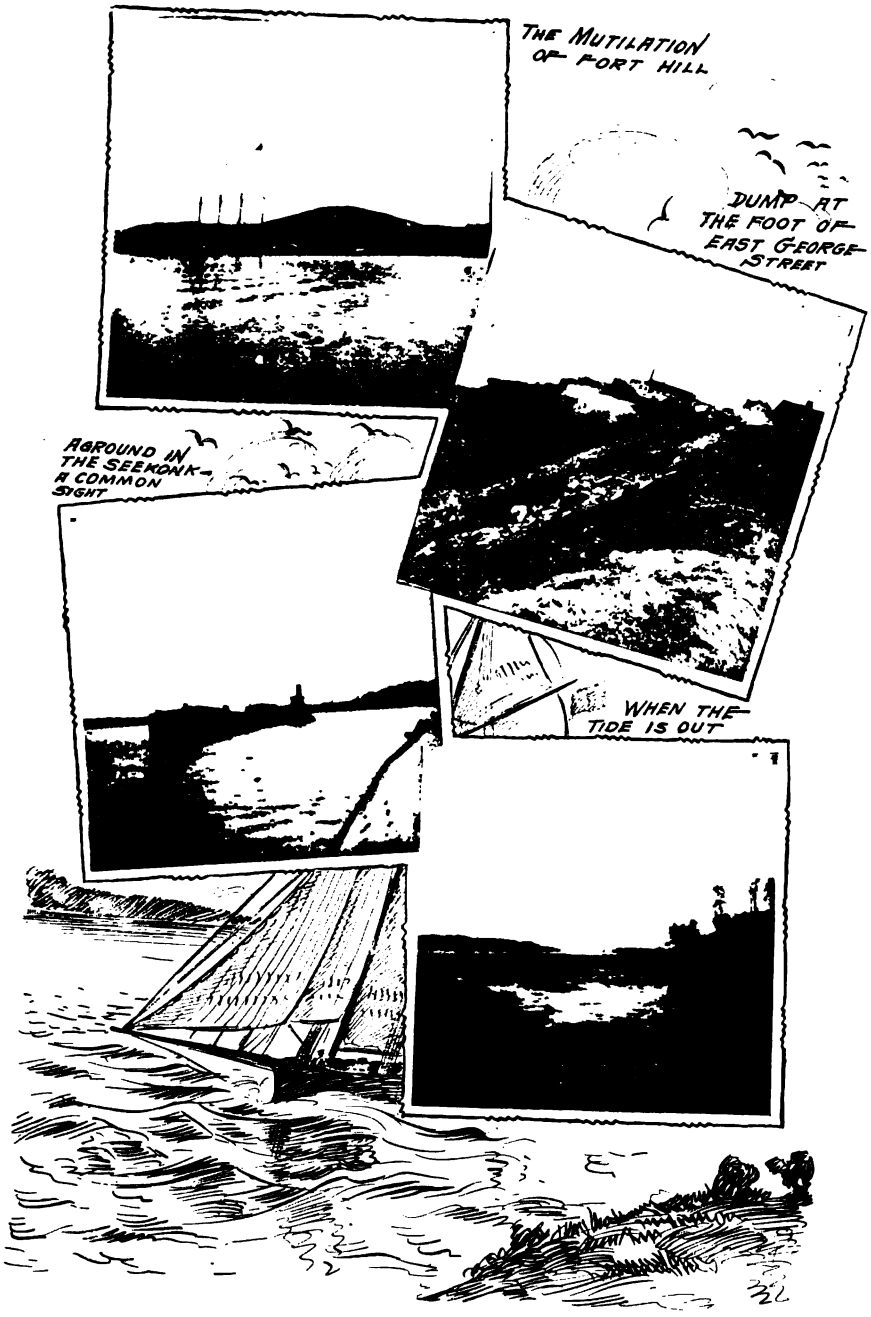
would remove the present difficulties in the navigation of the Seekonk to Pawtucket. At a much less expense than would be necessary for the dredging of a proper channel to Pawtucket, the whole surface of the river would become navigable for boats that now have great difficulty in proceeding at all. The project then is of much commercial importance, and would give to Pawtucket for the first time a real harbor. It would also remove the troublesome tidal currents that make boating difficult and even dangerous, and vastly improve the character of the shores, which have edges that are quite unsightly and already more or less foul at low tide. Among other things, it was conclusively

Sanitary Advantage.

demonstrated by the Boston experiments "that a fresh water basin could receive a much larger quantity of pollution without causing offence than is possible with a basin filled with salt water." It has been proposed that when the Consolidated railroad shall build their contemplated tunnel under the East Side of Providence, that the material excavated shall be used to fill in the necessary causeway across the lower river.

Of course, the æsthetic improvement would be very great indeed, for trees and interesting floral adornments could grow much closer to the edge of the fresh water than to the varying shores of the salt water. Economy in building the banks is another consideration of importance.

There is little comparison between the level edges of the Charles



16. THE SEEKONK RIVER; SOME DISAGREEABLE FEATURES.

A. The mutilation of Fort Hill.
B. Dumping ground near the end of East George street.
The unlovely edge of a fine residential section.
C, *D*. Some things that a dam would improve.

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17. The Seekonk River. Upper Basin.

A very narrow strip of land along the eastern shore is needed to preserve this superb water park.

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18. An East Providence Pine Forest, 1904.

Such a landscape adorned the shore of Omega Pond. They are very rare near great cities. It is very desirable that we save what few are now left.

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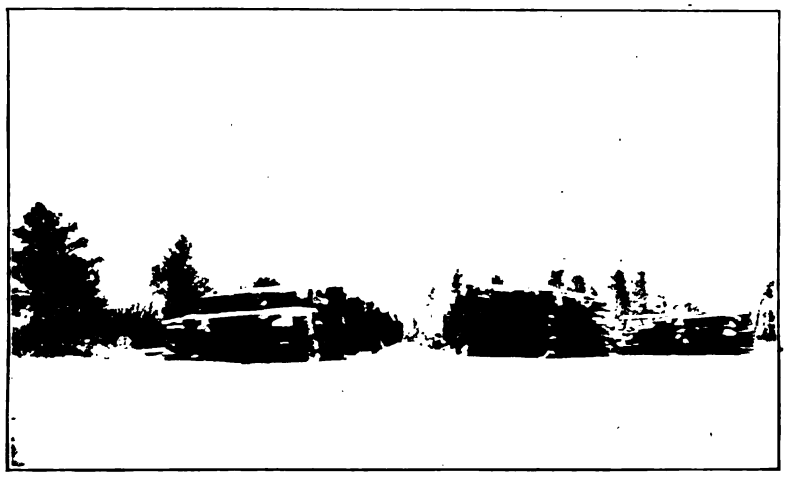
river basin and the beautiful verdure-crowned bluffs of the Seekonk shore. Happily, the whole western side of the upper basin is saved from the fate that has befallen the part of the river south of Red bridge. A recent purchase of the city of Providence extends the possession of Blackstone Park to the grounds of Butler Hospital for the Insane, and beyond that come Swan Point and Riverside cemeteries. As all these are well-endowed institutions, it appears that this shore of the river will be beautiful forever. Along the front of these reservations

Beauty of the Seekonk.



19. Site of an East Providence Pine Forest.—"Saw Mill Avenue," 1905.

After a ruthless woodchopper had destroyed an asset of everlasting value to 300,000 people.

there extends for about three miles a line of commanding bluffs, nicely wooded and intelligently cultivated for most of the way. When the present fragments of a river road shall have been connected and extended to a point near the Pawtucket gas works, a splendid drive will be provided, comparable with many of the famous drives of the country. As a fitting complement of this drive, however, and of much impor-

The "River Road."

tance to its value, there must be a similar drive upon the opposite side of the river. Except for the break at Phillipsdale, the pine covered banks remain in much the same condition as when Roger Williams established his first settlement on the shore of Omega pond in 1635 and sent forth a message of freedom to the world.

Advantage should be taken of the conditions before the groves have all been cut down for firewood. As in the case of the Charles river basin, where it also happened that two cities and one town were affected, such an improvement may best be brought about through the metropolitan form of action.

THE NORTHERN CIRCUIT.

From the termination of the proposed river road on the East Side, an avenue or parkway is sketched over the high ridge between Providence and Pawtucket, known as Beacon hill. It would cross Pawtucket avenue near the car station of the trolley company and curve through the attractive grove bordering the Moshassuck Valley and the old Blackstone canal. Near the city line it enters the North burying ground, which belongs to the city of Providence, and proceeds through a comparatively unused portion of the cemetery to a point near Branch avenue. Beyond the Consolidated railroad it leads through a district sadly in need of improvement to Leonard's pond, where in a midst of a rapidly thickening tenement region some vestiges of beauty yet remain. The little stream called the West river has here many of the aspects of an open sewer, but this condition, it is assumed, will not always be permitted. North of Hawkins street, the property named upon the map "West River Park" has many natural advantages for a public pleasure ground which the inhabitants of Wanskuck and Eagle Park districts have put to much good use in the past. Bradley Hill is next in the route. A portion of the splendid cultivated forest, tended for so many years with loving care by the late Judge Bradley, remains near the old mansion. The

The West River Park.

Bradley Hill.

20. Scenes Along the Northern Circuit.

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21. MOSHASSUCK FENS; ADAPTED FOR PARK LANDS AND FOR NOTHING ELSE.

"The little rivers will be open sewers through slums, or objects of delight."

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greater part, however, has recently been destroyed and accordingly been removed from the suggested plans of a park system.

Pleasant Valley to Davis Park.

Down over the hill a well-filled brook comes tumbling over the stones out of the Elmhurst grounds and rushes around the end of a gigantic rock, in a valley exquisite in picturesque attraction. Beside this dell, well named Pleasant Valley, the contour of the ground invites the construction of a broad drive leading directly to Davis Park and on by the ways heretofore proposed to the centre of the city. That such a valley, scarce a mile from the State House, can still exist in its unspoiled beauty seems almost incredible. The lack of proper approach to this section of the city, which must certainly be overcome, has given us the valuable opportunity for its permanent preservation.

THE PAWTUCKET CIRCUIT.

In Pawtucket, Central Falls, and Valley Falls the population is something over seventy-five thousand. On the west the precipitous side of Stump Hill bounds the settlement. On the east we have the valley of the Ten Mile river. The deep gorge of the Blackstone, once wholly beautiful and still retaining much loveliness, except in the centre of Pawtucket, is midway between. Beyond the North burying ground, on the line of the parkway described as a part of the northern circuit, extends the broad and beautiful valley of the Moshassuck. The little river runs partly in its original channel and partly in the bed of the old Blackstone canal, though it often overflows them both. It is foul and ill-smelling and already a menace to the health of the neighborhood. Here, as time goes on, all sorts of troublesome problems will originate; but in this case, as in others, they may be solved by creating a "Fenway," as was done with the Muddy brook basin in Boston. The willingness of many of the owners whose lands run into this valley to contribute a portion of their holdings for public use will assist in the settlement of the difficulty. It

The Moshassuck Valley Problem.

is of greatest importance to the whole district of Woodlawn and South Woodlawn that the present conditions be altered, and preferably by some such attractive and inexpensive expedient. Beyond the high railroad embankment is St. Francis' cemetery. North of it is a tract of land covered with a splendid grove and furnishing opportunities for a skating pond. It has already been set aside by its owner, the city of Pawtucket, for a public park. Farther along, north of the Lorraine mills, the sides of the valley become precipitous, and a drive along the western edge would connect the ends of numerous streets.

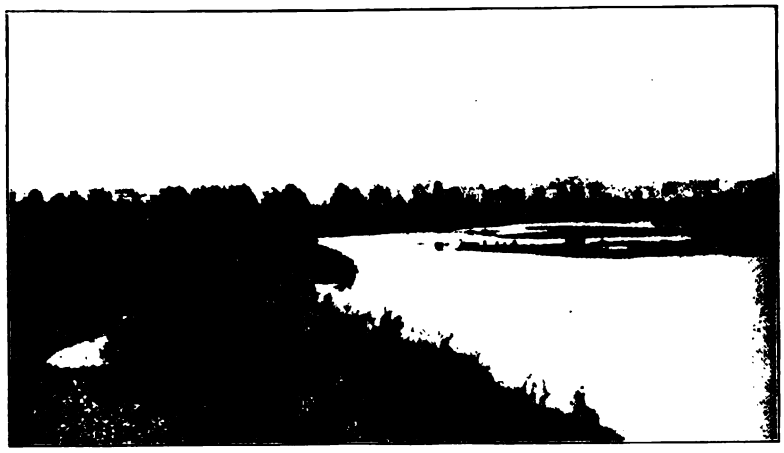
22. THE POCASSET IN FLOOD TIME.—A COMMON PROBLEM.

"As to fresh water streams, they are subject to floods which cannot be confined within any ordinary conduits or covered channels, as disastrous experiments in this line have proved. If then these waterways must be preserved even in the midst of dense populations, how shall they best be treated? Shall they continue in the future, as in the past and present, to be abused, polluted, and defaced by the population living on their banks or near them? Shall factory waste, sewage, and rubbish of all sorts be continually poured into them, and allowed to rot in the sun when the water is drawn off to turn the wheels of factories? Such practices can hardly be conducive to the public health of a region already more than threatened with malaria. Such practices should indeed be impossible in every civilized community."—*Chas. Eliot, in Report of Mass. Park System.*

Stump Hill bears the same relation to Pawtucket that Neutaconkanut Hill does to Providence, for it looks over all of Providence and all of Pawtucket and away down the bay. The views from its rocky heights are grand.

Reservoir Heights and Olney's Pond.

Pawtucket owns a tract about the reservoir, and Providence owns an adjoining piece of hill top property. West and north of the reservoir is an immense wild tract of country full of rocks and forests, and the most exquisite gem of lakes—Olney's Pond is its



23. Back Bay Fens, Boston. A Problem Solved.

A useful and beautiful park provided in connection with the solving of an important drainage problem.

"Stony Brook and Muddy river presented, first of all, engineering questions, but had the waters of those streams been conducted away in sewers or canals, the expense would have been much greater than it has been. The cheapest way turned out to be the most beautiful way. The valleys of the streams were made to serve the enjoyment of the public, the water being conducted in open winding channels, simulating the course of a natural stream, while low marshy basins were provided for the overflow to which Stony brook was at times subject, much to the damage of the surrounding territory.

"So it happened that while this improvement fulfilled the demands for more efficient drainage in the best possible way, the landscape character of the territory, having been made permanently beautiful, has added enormously to the value of real estate throughout the entire neighborhood."—*Sylvester Baxter, in Metropolitan Park Report, Mass.*

prosaic name. Olney's pond is but four miles north of the State House and two and a half west of the railroad station at Pawtucket, and it is well worth a pilgrimage to look upon its rocky forest-covered shores and its tranquil waters, undisturbed by turmoil of busy cities so near, but all unseen. Here in the Lincoln woods is the place for a forest reservation like the Middlesex Fells, to extend from the Pawtucket reservoir to the wild gorge and exquisite lake and glen of Quinsnicket. It is the natural park land of the whole west side of Pawtucket and Central Falls, yet it lies wholly within the town of Lincoln. To expect the latter town, neither so rich nor so populous as the cities, to assume such a burden for the sake of its neighbors would be out of the question. Neither could they be expected to pay taxes upon a pleasure ground located in another town, and so metropolitan control becomes essential. Smithfield avenue runs for several miles along the eastern base of Stump Hill. Beyond Saylesville the road crosses and recrosses the Moshassuck river, which is here quite clear and sparkling. There is a succession of lovely ponds and waterfalls and fine old colonial mansions. Quaint Butterfly factory is not far away, and the original of the Rhode Island building for the St. Louis fair is just up the road toward Quinsnicket.

Scott's Pond.

Just across the fields to the east is Scott's pond, celebrated alike for its floating island and for its natural beauty. Its shores all, or nearly all, belong to a big mill corporation and are jealously kept from disfigurement, on the well-known principle that such a recreation place adds much to the efficiency of a working population. It is reasonable to believe that much of this section might be contributed as part of a comprehensive park system.

Valley Falls Pond and Blackstone River.

Across the road from Scott's pond we look far down from steep, wooded bluffs upon the wide-stretching lagoons and bright green meadows of the valley of the Blackstone. Here it is nearly a mile wide, and as almost the whole expanse is at times covered by water, its value is little for any other purpose than that which it

24. Olney's Pond, Lincoln.

It has been saved from encroachment by the rocky barrier of Stump Hill. From its northern side a splendid forest stretches to Quinsnicket.

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25. SCOTT'S POND AND THE UPPER MOSHASSUCK, NEAR SMITHFIELD AVENUE.

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already so admirably serves. Upon any pleasant summer afternoon hundreds of people may be seen strolling about the shores or rowing and fishing upon the placid waters of this Valley Falls pond, which is indeed, in the very dooryard of Central Falls and Valley Falls. One may travel far without finding a more beautiful scene than this as it appears when the sun is sinking behind Stump Hill and all the waterways are shining streaks of gold.

A little west of the Broad Street bridge the river contracts, and until we pass Division street it averages perhaps one hundred and fifty feet wide. It winds past mills and under bridges and over dams, but

26. THE VALLEY FALLS POND.

Its waters are alike useful for water power and for recreation purposes. Its banks are too precipitous for building and its meadows too low and wet to be available. A bordering road should be provided on the top of the bluff, to separate the land most useful for building from that which is most useful for park purposes.

as far down as Central avenue retains much of beauty. Its steep shores have forbidden much building at the very edge and thus saved the opportunity to preserve it as the most beautiful feature that Central Falls and Pawtucket may ever hope to have.

Central Avenue Boulevard.

Central avenue is already very wide, and treated as a boulevard, with four lines of trees and grassways (to take the place of some of the dusty macadam and weeds) would furnish a link to the Ten Mile river valley. About a mile and a half from the Central avenue bridge, over the Blackstone, is the bridge at Lebanon over the Ten Mile river. Below is Memorial Park, recently dedicated by the city of Pawtucket after several years of delay. It contains the interesting old Daggett mansion. Now let us continue down the river, under the bridges of the highways that lead out from Pawtucket and Providence into Massachusetts—past Central pond, well known to students of summer art schools, to the beautiful glen of Hunt's Mills. No lengthy description is needed of the lovely Ten Mile river—so dear to canoeists and picknickers, and all lovers of nature—one of the most exquisite and dainty of little streams. It would indeed be a tremendous loss and sacrilege if the luxuriant foliage upon its banks should become but a memory, and the stream itself the drainage canal of all the valley. The great nodding elms and the merry rippling waters appeal to us for protection—for preservation—to be a delight and a joy for all the ages to come.

Ten Mile River.

Protection of Water Supply.

Here, in addition to the usual problems of the small river that must become, by the growth of the population, either an object of perennial delight or an open sewer, we are also confronted by the needs of a water supply. The pumping station at Hunt's Mills furnishes a large district with its water, and that water can only be kept pure by public reservation of the valley above. The Ten Mile river brings us again to Omega pond and the eastern shore of the Seekonk. A magnificent

27. VALLEY FALLS POND.

A splendid park that needs little except preservation from pollution and disfigurement.

THE
PUF

28. Along the Blackstone River.

Views between Valley Falls Pond and Central avenue.

A narrow strip along its edges should be provided, as is done with similar rivers in most of the European cities.

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29. ALONG THE TEN MILE RIVER.

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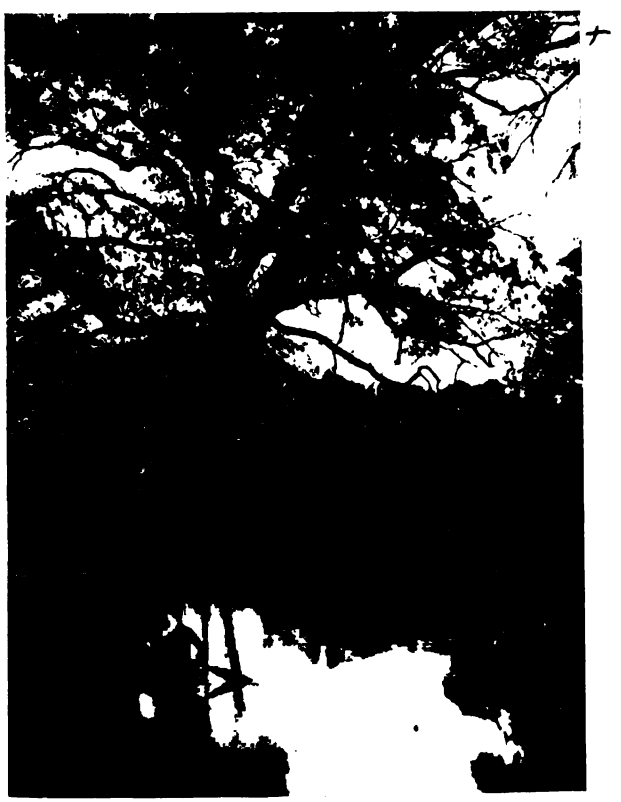
TEN MILE RIVER.

HUNTS MILLS.

Source of the EAST PROVIDENCE WATER SUPPLY.

Photos by Dean.

Published from "Trips by Trolley and Steamboat."



CANOEING ON THE TEN MILE RIVER.

THE TEN MILE RIVER.

AN EXQUISITE STREAM, OF GREAT RECREATIVE VALUE.

NO LANDSCAPE ART COULD IMPROVE ITS NATURAL ADORNMENT.

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31. The Pawtuxet River.

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grove adorned the shore of the pond before it was cut down for fuel in 1904. The price of the lumber obtained by the owners was, doubtless, attractive to them, but its value in the form of boards and timbers compared with its greater value to three hundred thousand people when standing in lofty trunks of the beautiful pines seems like a miserable pittance.

Another Warning.

THE PAWTUXET VALLEY.

South of Providence we have another river that makes the same

32. THE PAWTUXET RIVER.

(Photos. by W. A. Dean.

In places the banks rise abruptly from the river. At other places the shores are covered with broad lakes in the springtime overflow. Such a reservation as proposed, with its bordering roadway, would properly develop a great amount of real estate, and the owners of land everywhere along the river could well afford to contribute a strip of generous width for a parkway.

appeal to us as the Ten Mile, and bears upon its bosom hundreds of boating parties while the Ten Mile carries dozens. Already it has been reached by the straggling pioneers at the fringe of the southern suburbs, who—by way of showing their appreciation of the scenes of rural delight, that it might be assumed they had come from the city to seek—are building some very ugly cabins and making the banks ragged in their destructive ambition with the axe. A reservation should be provided all the way from the holdings of Providence at Pettaconsett and Sockanosset Hill to the falls at Pawtuxet bridge, which, happily, are also owned by the city. Several alternate routes are proposed for reaching the Pawtuxet Valley from the southern park circuit, and those by way of the Pocasset river or by Meshanticut Park are worthy of consideration; and we must not overlook the beauty of Blackmore pond, which is so convenient to Auburn and Eden Park.

The reasons why the banks of a river flowing through a city must

33. Boating on the Thames at Hampden Court.

From the Metropolitan Park Report, Boston, 1893. "The boating scenes of the Charles River Reservation have now become comparable with those of the Thames." The Pawtuxet has similar beautiful possibilities under public control.

be preserved are becoming well understood. The Charles river reservation, with its famous boating-place at Riverside, eleven miles from Boston, is near enough to Providence to furnish an object-lesson; while the Bronx Park in New York and the Wissahicken of Philadelphia are familiar to very many.

The Pawtuxet is excelled in beauty by none of these. Already the city of Providence and the State of Rhode Island own several miles of its shores.

Park avenue being the nearest street that runs east and west, a

34. "PAWTUXET FALLS PARK."

The Falls of the Pawtuxet, together with adjoining land on both sides of the river, although not yet formally dedicated as a public park, is fortunately the property of the city of Providence.

highway is much needed from Pawtuxet to the neighborhood of Pettaconsett, and a road extending along the border of a river reservation would furnish a very charming and useful drive.

A Needed Highway.

The value of the river itself, as a water highway, exceeds all other

considerations. Upon a certain stretch of the Charles river, which much resembles the Pawtuxet, over four thousand pleasure boats are in frequent use, and the industries stimulated thereby, as well as the pleasures, are well worthy of consideration. The Pawtuxet river has equal possibilities.

A Valuable Waterway.

The south end of Roger Williams Park is not far from the river, and there is a waterway between by which boats might be navigated if two little locks or runways, like the ones on English rivers, were provided. Chicago appears very willing to spend millions for the preservation of the less beautiful and more distant Desplaines river, and our people would be loudly calling for Pawtuxet preservation if they realized the present need.

BOULEVARD TO ROCKY POINT AND WARWICK.

Leading toward Pawtuxet Neck and the cove at the mouth of the river, there is the Narragansett boulevard, laid out and largely completed from the neighborhood of Field's Point and Fort Independence. To the south of the Pawtuxet, sad to tell, there is no boulevard, or even a drive, anywhere near the shore of our great waterway. Nor is there any on the other side of Narragansett bay. From Pawtuxet south a drive is evidently needed along the shore to Warwick Neck. Fair street should be extended as a boulevard until it meets Shawomet avenue, and dwellings should be allowed only on the western side. With a public reservation along the water front, the whole extent of the shore would become of common benefit to all the owners upon the street, and of general good to everybody else. Gaspee Point, famous for the first of our long series of American naval victories, has a fine bathing beach, and is on the way to Shawomet and River View. The shore drive should be extended to Rocky Point and it is properly claimed that this beautiful property should be held in public ownership.

The Narragansett Boulevard.

From Pawtuxet to Warwick Neck.

Rocky Point.

BOULEVARD TO BARRINGTON.

The suburbs of Drownville and Nayatt, in Barrington, are attracting a most desirable class of population, and even Warren and Bristol, and Swansea, Mass., are coming to be the homes of many people who have their regular occupations in the city. The drive to these places follows a roundabout and very unattractive way through East Providence, and climbs two hills, of one hundred and ten, and one hundred and forty feet, respectively. This may easily be avoided by utilizing Second street south from Watchemoket square to Fort Hill and then extending Vue de l' Eau avenue across the narrow part of Watchemoket cove, where the tide mill was once located. Upon the edge of the bluff a splendid esplanade, overlooking the upper harbor, would do much for the East Providence neighborhood. Beyond Watchemoket cove the way in the rear of Squantum is extremely picturesque. Pawtucket avenue and Pomham avenue, which must be widened for their present traffic, would form a continuation of the boulevard. The Washington bridge has long been inadequate to carry its travellers, and if the next new bridge should be built directly across from the foot of Gano street to Fort Hill, it would save over three-quarters of a mile in traveling toward the southeast.

Bullock's Point avenue leads down to Crescent Park, where there should be another public bayside reservation. A fine beach extends to the end of Bullock's Point. From the rear of Crescent Park, a bridge may easily be erected beside the railroad bridge across the shallow cove, effecting a still further saving for the numerous travellers to this part of the State.

Narragansett bay is famous and beautiful. It is the mecca of thousands of tourists who from many distant cities look forward year by year to a summer visit on its shores. Yet along the miles of beach and inlet shore, with which this State is so richly provided, there is not a foot that belongs to the public.

THE VARIED ENDORSEMENTS.

The benefits of such a work are well illustrated by the varied character of the endorsements which a metropolitan park project for Rhode Island has already received by the formal vote of representative institutions. The State medical societies approve because of the important part it plays in hygiene and as a preventive of disease. The director of Butler hospital for the Insane gives testimony that the lack of parks and the absence of sweetness and light are potent causes of insanity, and reminds us that the private parks surrounding all modern asylums are the most necessary and effective of all the agencies for the cure of mental diseases. Such business organizations as the Providence Chamber of Commerce, the Pawtucket Business Men's Association, the Commercial Club, and similar bodies call for a project that will greatly promote the commercial prosperity and the successful development of the community. The Rhode Island Federation of Labor realizes the necessity to the working classes of preserving the places for outdoor exercise and recreation, and the Rhode Island Automobile Club appreciates the value of attractive drives surrounding the cities and connecting the places or natural beauty and interest.

The moral welfare and physical well-being that demand this work are emphasized by the many religious and charitable societies; patriotic societies call for the preservation of the places connected with the city's history; art clubs and literary clubs see in it a stimulus to refinement and a quickened sense of beauty; horticultural and natural history societies and institutions like the Rhode Island School of Design find it quite in accord with the objects of their existence, and the many improvement societies discover in it the means of making a beautiful and happy city instead of a sordid and ugly one.

THE IMMEDIATE DUTY.

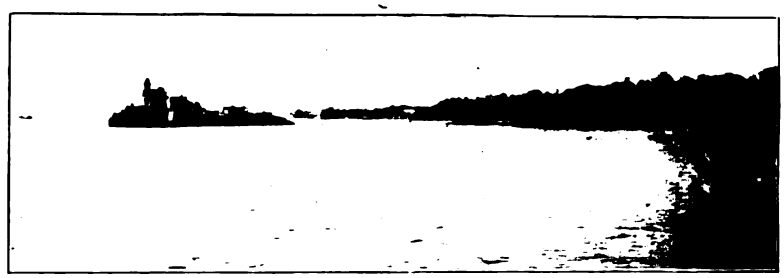
Above all things, the Park Association considers the preparation of a properly comprehensive plan and the declaration of a consistent

park policy to be of prime importance. The idea cannot be too strongly emphasized that the great duty of the present is to acquire the necessary lands and locations, which nature and posterity may more fully develop. No costly constructions are necessary in any part of the district under consideration, nor is much artificial re-arrangement of the natural surface desirable in any event. Once the lands in question are preserved for permanent use, works of development may safely wait.

CONCLUSION.

It will be observed that no very large or valuable tracts of land are proposed to be taken in any of these improvements, but in the few hundred acres described is about as much diversity of scenery and picturesque opportunity as any city in the country can show at its very doors. There should eventually be some larger additional reservations a little farther removed. Out in the west, but well within reach of the busy community, are great wild forests, and the hills of Johnston rise five hundred or six hundred feet above beautiful lakes that most of the city-dwellers have never seen. Another wilderness stretches around the south branch of the Pawtuxet and demands preservation if the public water supply for the city of Providence and the mills of the Pawtuxet Valley is to be maintained.

With all these natural provisions of rivers and lakes and salt water beaches, the whole metropolitan district should not be so woefully lacking in public bathing places. With such splendid opportunities for beautiful drives and delightful avenues, the present impossibility of driving for any considerable distance through pleasant ways, or of finding a street of guaranteed future attractiveness on which to build a fine estate, should not exist. With scenes of natural beauty and delight on every hand, the children of the tenements and the tired toilers of the factories must not be cut off forever from recreation grounds and fresh air.



35. NARRAGANSETT BAY. "The greatest asset of the State."

Scene at Pomham Island.

In all the past, recreation places have been free. Continued prosperity demands that they must still be accessible to the great and ever increasing population. A strong and growing sentiment demands their acquirement and preservation—not an elaborate and costly alteration, but a plan for their harmonious joining in one grand chain as a magnificent possession for all posterity—a public domain in which the poorest of the people may gain delight and strength and claim part ownership, and which the wealth of kings could not create where nature had been less kind.

HENRY A. BARKER,

JANUARY, 1905. *For the Public Park Association.*

36. NEAR THE RHODE ISLAND YACHT CLUB, PAWTUXET.

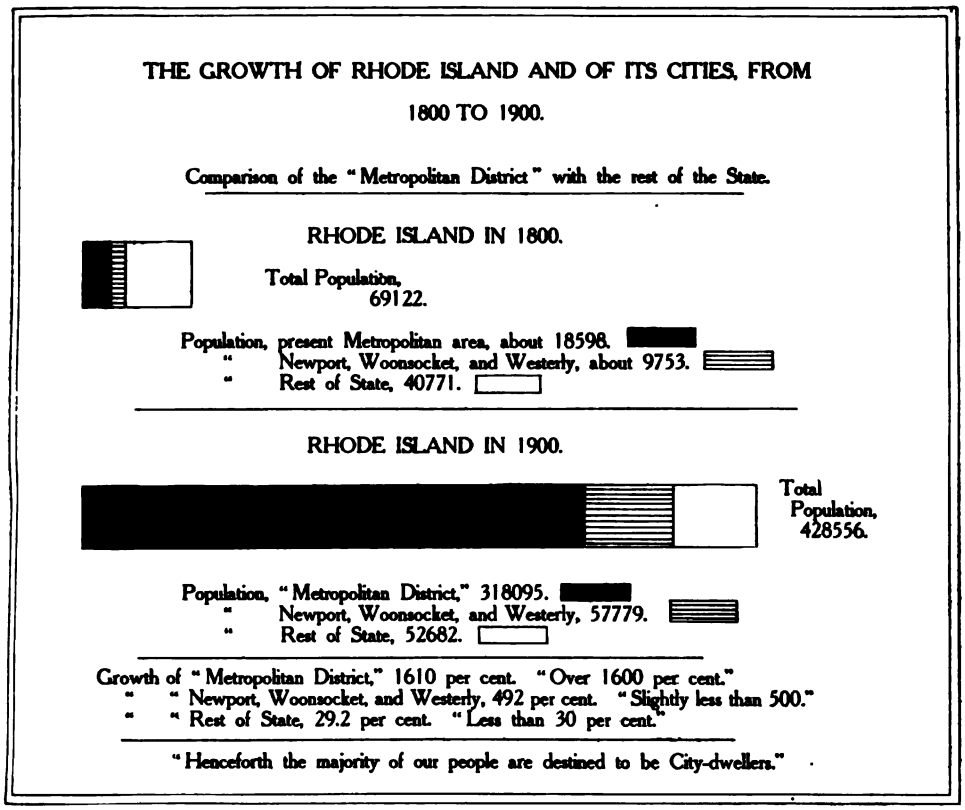


DIAGRAM No. 1.—Showing that the people of Rhode Island are becoming "city dwellers."

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PARK NEEDS IN THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, AND PRESENT PROVISION FOR THEM.

From the results of the school census of 1905, and by other methods, it is estimated that the present population of the metropolitan district is at least 360,000. During the nineteenth century it doubled its population about once in every twenty-one years and gained over 1,600 per cent. in the century. Continuance of growth in the same ratio, which during late years has shown some signs of increase rather than diminution, would bring a population of over 950,000 in 1935—but thirty years hence—and more than a million and a half in 1950.

The Government census in 1900 classes 91.5 per cent. of all the people of Rhode Island as "city dwellers," *i. e.*, those who live amid urban surroundings rather than those of the country. The average for the whole United States is about 33 per cent. It is obvious, [illegible], that however varied and conclusive may be the reasons [illegible] may anywhere demand the securing of reservations for the [illegible] welfare, all such reasons must have more direct application to Rhode Island than to any other State, since a vastly larger pro- [illegible] of its people live in the cities and large towns. By making [illegible] sons, however, we see that neither the State, as a whole, nor any of its cities, have made provision for public grounds to the extent [illegible] ognized as necessary in other parts of the country.

PROVIDENCE COMPARED WITH THE AVERAGE CITY.

(*See Diagram No.* 2.)

There were, in 1900, twenty-four cities in the United States of over 150,000 population. From the statistics of twenty of them, which are available for comparison, it appears that;—

"The Average City,"

had one acre of parks to every 257 persons, which amount was recognized as inadequate;

spent 2.72 per cent. of its revenue to maintain its parks;

had a valuation of $756 per capita;

had one acre of parks to every $284,088 of its wealth.

Providence,

had one acre of parks to each 540 persons in the metropolitan district;

spent 8/10 of 1 per cent. of its revenue to maintain its parks (one third the average);

had a valuation of $1,033 per capita (being much more wealthy than the average),

had one acre of parks to every $396,714 of its wealth (not as liberal as the average).

Good authorities on municipal finance consider an expense of sixty cents per year for each inhabitant (or one car fare per month) a proper allowance for maintaining the pleasure and recreation grounds of the people.

Providence

expended twenty-seven cents per inhabitant per year (or one car fare every two months), but the net outlay was about sixteen cents, for the rest was earned by concessions in Roger Williams Park and in other ways. The suburban cities and towns spent nothing. Pawtucket spent in 1904 $5,363.93, or about 12½ cents per inhabitant. Central Falls spent 7 8/10 cents per inhabitant, and North Providence part of the Lyman bequest.

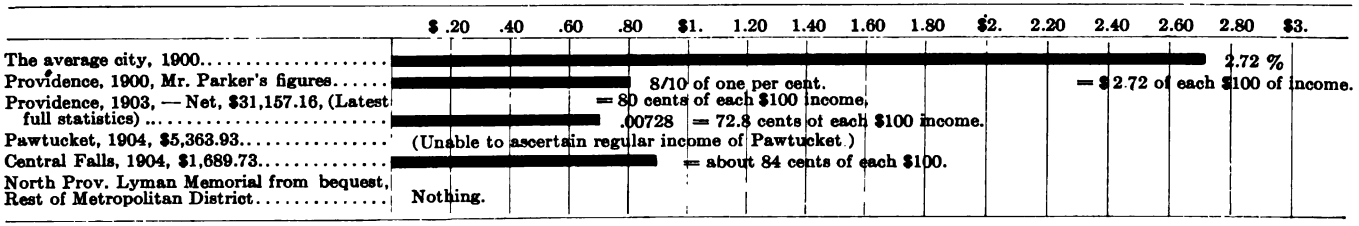
The best authorities consider that there should be at least one acre of park land or public reservation to each two hundred inhabitants, although the Metropolitan Park Commission of Chicago ask for one to each one hundred. The cities of the country are fast approaching or exceeding the former ratio. It is probable that most of the twenty-four largest cities do already exceed it. Those which do not, with

PARK EXPENDITURES COMPARED.

Providence Compared with the "Average City."

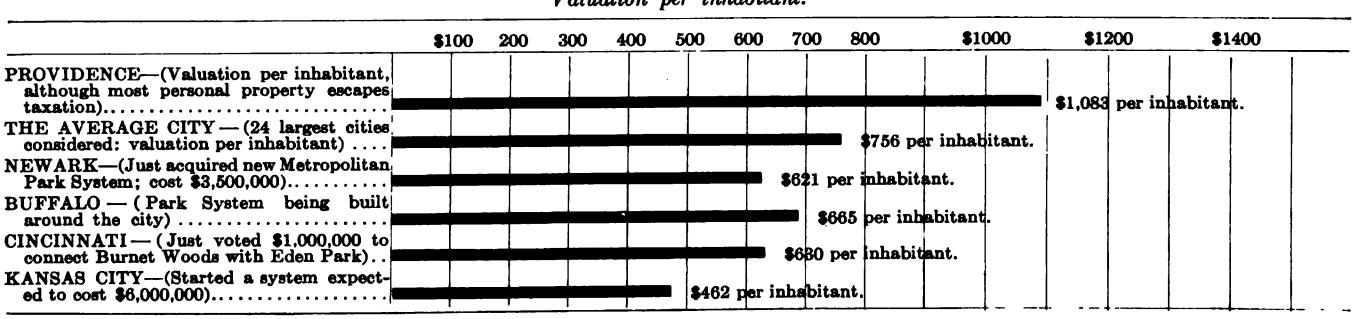
24 American cities exceed 150.000 people. The following average is of 20. Washington, Cincinnati, Newark, and Jersey City are now engaged in elaborate park extensions, and therefore excluded from comparison.

Proportion of Total Income used for Park Purposes.



COMPARATIVE WEALTH OF CITIES.

Financial ability of Providence to save its natural advantages of public grounds compared with the resources of the average city. Valuation per inhabitant.



From U. S. Census of 1900. — Minneapolis, $486 per inhabitant; Louisville, $577; St. Paul, $511; Rochester, $684. "On the whole the comparative wealth of the different cities is fairly correct." — G. A. Parker.

Diagram No. 2.

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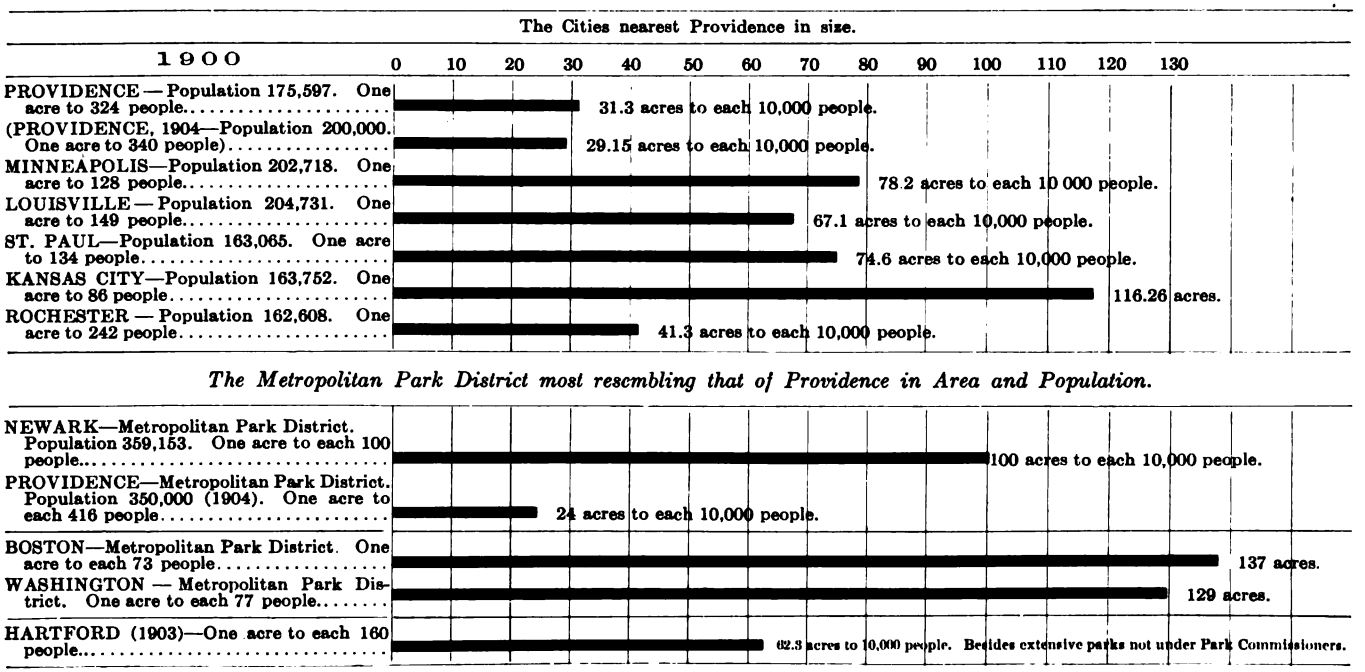
COMPARISON OF PARK AREAS TO NUMBER OF PEOPLE.

Number of Acres of Public Grounds to each 10,000 *of the Population.*



Several of these cities have greatly increased their park acreage since 1900.

The above diagram is made up from elaborate tables, prepared by Mr. G. A. Parker, of Hartford,—recognised as the best authority on park statistics, Vice-President of the American Civic Association. They were taken from the best procurable information—the last United States Census and other sources.

DIAGRAM No. 3.

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but one exception, now have elaborate projects on hand to improve their conditions. (See diagram No. 3.)

Park Acres of Other Cities.

Minneapolis, the city next larger than Providence in 1900, (population 202,718), has three times the park area (1,748 acres) and expends twice as much yearly ($83,000) upon it, although the wealth of the city per inhabitant ($486) is less than one-half as much. St. Paul, somewhat smaller than Providence (population in 1900, 163,000), has twice as much park acreage (1,189 acres) and expends twice as much ($75,000) to maintain it. The wealth per capita ($511) is less than half as great as that of Providence. These "twin cities," which it is proposed to join in a metropolitan park plan, are now about 34,000 larger in combined population than our own metropolitan district, although their combined valuation is very much less. They have nearly four times as much park area, which they deem insufficient, and expend about four times as much (report of 1903) to maintain it.

Indianapolis, population 169,000, the city next smaller than Providence, expended in 1903 three times as much ($96,000) as Providence to maintain its parks. Its per capita wealth is less than 70 per cent. that of Providence. Kansas City and Rochester, which are slightly smaller than Indianapolis, had one park acre to each 86 and 242 inhabitants, respectively. Louisville, population 204,731 in 1900, had one acre of parks to each 149 people.

Comparing centres of population, apart from city lines, the metropolitan district of Newark is most nearly even with that of "Providence Plantations" in area and population, and had an acre of parks in 1900 to each 100 of its people. It now reports one acre to every 89 inhabitants. Providence, being wealthier, can afford to treat its people better than most cities, but merely to maintain a rate of one acre to each 200 people the city proper would need 1,000 acres instead of the 540 reported in 1900, and the metropolitan district would require 1,750 acres. To come back to New England, Hartford, much less than half as large as Providence, spends more than half as much again upon its parks and has large additional areas supported

by donations. It is building a splendid chain of parkways around the city. Worcester, Springfield, and New Haven are also surpassing us in their achievements.

THE PROPER EXPENDITURE.

At the ordinary yearly rate of expenditure of sixty cents per inhabitant, or one car fare per month, for maintaining its public grounds the city of Providence would properly appropriate $120,000, or the whole metropolitan district $210,000. At the rate of fifty cents per inhabitant (population 360,000) it would pay the interest and yearly maintenance on a three and a half million dollar park system and provide the sinking funds to completely pay off the entire cost in forty years.

Since the "average city" expends 2.70 per cent. of its revenue upon parks, it is reasonable enough to expect that Providence and Pawtucket might do likewise. Few people would realize that it was a burden, even if it never came back in increased returns. And while, owing to particularly favoring circumstances, our own park system need not cost $3,500,000, it is interesting to note that the present valuation of the metropolitan district is just about one hundred times that amount, and that such an outlay would be in the same proportion as if a merchant with a capital of $100,000 were to devote 1 per cent. of it, or $1,000, to such improvement of his store as would enable him to continue competition upon equal terms with his neighbors.

A TRADE AND POPULATION CENTRE.

(*See Diagrams Nos.* 4, 5, *and* 6, *of the* 30 *Mile, the* 40 *Mile, and the* 80 *Mile Circles, Respectively.*)

Since Massachusetts is more thickly settled than any other of the United States, and since the counties which are near Rhode Island are the most populous ones, it comes about that an extremely large number of people are found within an hour or two of Providence by trolley or automobile, as well as within the convenient limit of a

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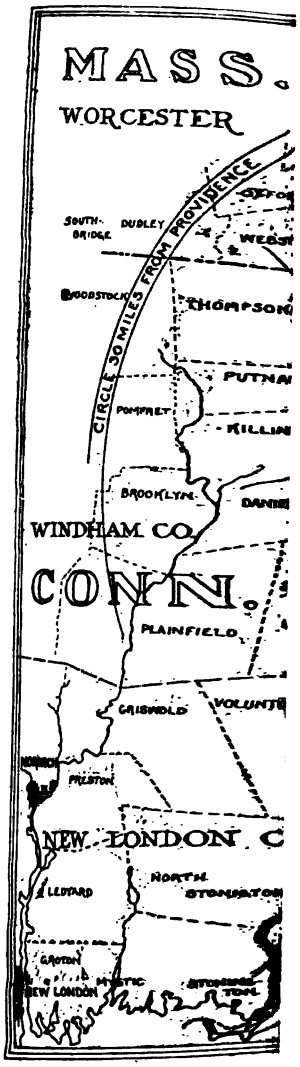

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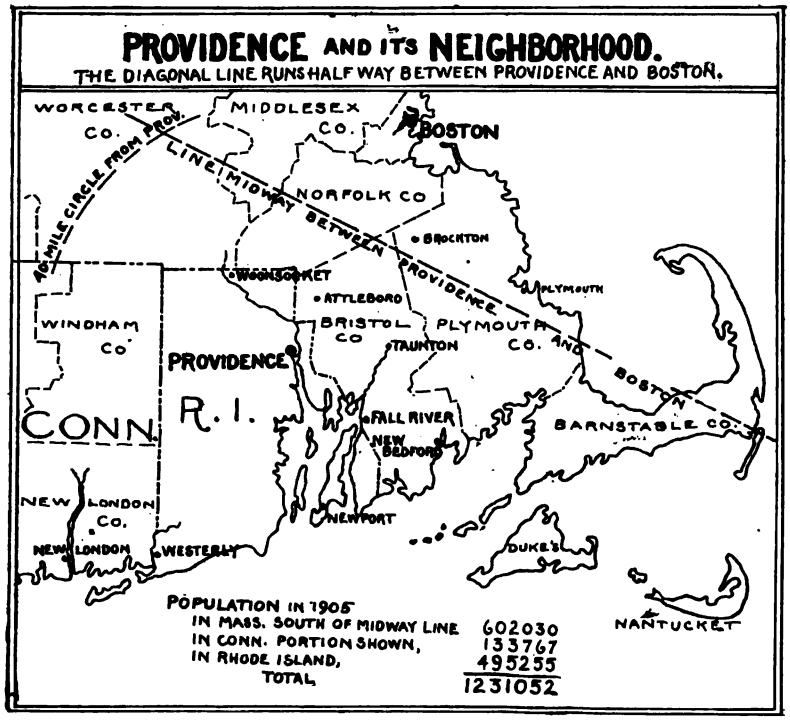

DIAGRAM No. 5.—Showing the Massachusetts population—which is nearer to Providence than to Boston—also Rhode Island and the two adjoining counties of Connecticut.

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TAT POPULATION CENTRES

THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE.

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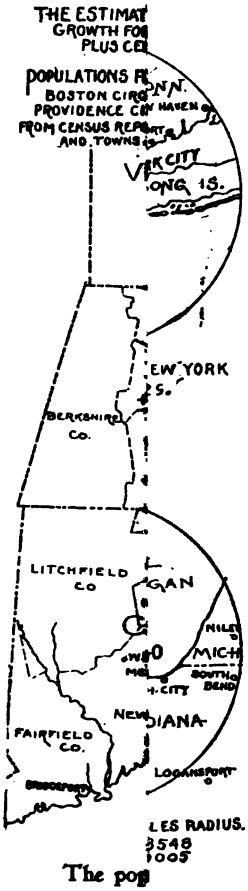
ew York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington, and Chicago.



BALTIMORE AND WASHINGTON 80 MILE CIRCLES.
BALT. CIRCLE-(1900) 2347867-EST.(1905) 2546801.
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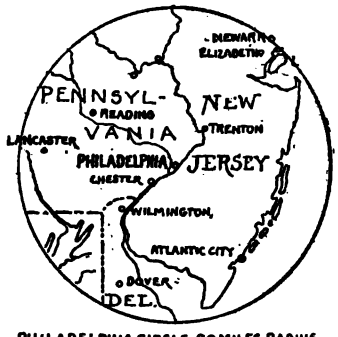


PHILADELPHIA CIRCLE-80 MILES RADIUS.
POPULATION (1900) 4252534
ESTIMATE 1905. 4745496.

The pop

The head that can be drawn in any other portion of the Western phere, contains over 2,000,000 people.

DIAGRAM 6 — Continued.

day's railroad excursion. The population of these three states, of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut is commonly supposed to be the wealthiest in general average of any of the people of the country. It follows, therefore, that Greater Providence—and consequently the whole State—has more to gain in a material way, by providing such attractions as will cater to the possible visitors who are just outside its gates, than most communities could have.

This metropolitan district is the natural centre of trade for all of Bristol county, Massachusetts, with its three hundred thousand

37. NARRAGANSETT TERRACE.—BELOW CRESCENT PARK.

"A fine beach extends to the end of Bullock's Point." On account of its excellence and extreme accessibility, this is suggested as a public bathing place.

people, and for sundry populous towns in Norfolk and Worcester counties, as well as for the two Connecticut counties of Windham and New London. There are nearly six hundred thousand people of Massachusetts who are nearer to Providence than to Boston, and a million and a quarter in the area shown on diagram No. 5. Recently, they have been coming into town in much greater numbers than heretofore. Many evidences are noted of metropolitan growth. We see streets thronged as never before, retail stores growing prodigiously, trolley lines multiplying, uniting and knitting together suburbs which already extend well into Massachusetts. This movement will extend in constantly growing circles if the trip to Provi-

dence is made enjoyable and profitable. Parks and handsome streets, art galleries and fine schools, attractive shops and theatres, must all have a very distinct commercial value to the community.

NARRAGANSETT BAY AS AN ASSET OF THE STATE.

The Need of Public Resorts.

Narragansett bay is the most valuable asset of the State, from the standpoint of pleasure and health as well as of commercial prosperity, but our citizens have rights to its enjoyment that are but imperfectly satisfied, and there is also much to be gained by making it attractive to our neighbors. It should not ever become necessary to look through peep-holes, at so much a peep, for a view of its waters. The accompanying diagrams indicate that there can be no other shore

38. REVERE BEACH, AS IT WAS.

"Under private control, scattering buildings encumbered the beach and catered to a class which kept the decent and orderly majority away."

Revere Beach was one of the most costly parks of the Metropolitan Park system on account of the line of ugly shanties which catered to all sorts of public requirements, good and bad, but mostly bad. When these were swept away, it was said that the place would lose its popularity with the public.

resorts upon the western hemisphere, save those near New York and Philadelphia, that may be reached by so many visitors in a single day's excursion, as those of Narragansett. We know that the people from the inland towns are always longing for the shore and it behooves the city and State to cater to them and invite their coming.

It may be said by some that the summer resorts which we already have meet the requirements of the great mass of people better than any others would be likely to do, but it is nevertheless a fact that these places really cater to a somewhat small and noisy minority more than they do to the great throng of intelligent people. It is a matter of common knowledge that the excursion business of Narragansett bay has somewhat suffered in repute during recent years. There is no intention of blaming the gentlemen who manage the resorts, for it would be most unreasonable to expect them to operate

39. Revere Beach, as it is.

"Under public control, the shanties have been swept away; a broad promenade constructed; first class public bathing facilities provided; and general order maintained by an efficient park police."

On pleasant summer days, it is reported that there are anywhere from 125,000 to 150 000 people enjoying it.

them for any other purpose than to make the largest possible profit in the smallest possible time, and they cannot be expected to alter these places in an expensive manner or develop their possibilities in the way they should be developed. The case of Revere Beach near Boston is a very striking example of the great good that comes to a vast number of people through public ownership of the shore. (See illustrations.) Now from all over the State—from far beyond the limits of the 80 mile circle—come happy throngs to enjoy the salt breezes and the sight of the rolling ocean, and to promenade that great crescent, which extends from Everett toward Nahant.

Upon the whole of Narragansett bay there is no public bathing place. There is no public place from which the citizens of Rhode Island may look upon its waters. Solid lines of summer houses are being extended along both shores. Armies of campers are to be seen at every vantage point. It takes but fifty-three private ownerships of one hundred feet each to use up a mile of the frontage and cut off access from all the rear land. Great numbers of people, whose means allow, own boats of every sort and enjoy the facilities of the yacht clubs, and altogether there are said to be nearly 1,000 yachts owned between Providence and Newport. These things are all very fine for the fortunate ones, for the water surface will be always free, although its beauty will largely depend upon the treatment of the shores. But for the people who have but a single day and are not navigators there is the greatest need of public reservations on either shore of the bay, not too far down, as well as on some of its islands. The yacht owners, as well as others, like to have attractive places to go to, and at the present time even landing places are scarce. It means very much to the welfare and prosperity of Rhode Island that its greatest attraction should be managed for the greatest good of the greatest number.

SEVERAL QUOTATIONS OF ESPECIAL APPLICATION TO LOCAL CONDITIONS.

THE PENALTY OF INDIFFERENCE.

(From the Annual Message of President Roosevelt).

"The people of this country should clearly understand that no amount of industrial prosperity can in any way atone for the sapping of the vitality of those who are usually spoken of as the working classes. Upon their well-being, generation after generation, the well-being of the country and the race depends. The overcrowding of cities and the draining of country districts are unhealthy and even dangerous symptoms in our modern life. The slum exacts a heavy total of death from those who dwell therein; and this is the case, not merely among the high buildings in New York and Chicago, but in the alley slums of Washington. For a happy-go-lucky lack of concern for the youth to-day, the community will have to pay a terrible penalty of financial burden and social degradation to-morrow. * * * * * If when the children grow up, they are unhealthy in body and stunted or vicious in mind, then that race is decadent; and no heaping up of wealth, no splendor of momentary material prosperity, can avail in any degree as offsets. Public playgrounds are necessarily means for the development of wholesome citizenship in modern cities. It is desirable that vacant places be reserved in sections of the city which are destined to be built up solidly. All these needs should be met immediately."

VALLEY PARKS AND PARKWAYS.

(By F. L. Olmsted, Jr., in Report on the Baltimore Park System.

General Advantages of Parking the Banks of Streams.

"From the landscape point of view, it frequently happens that a great deal of charming scenery is to be found along the streams; the water itself is interesting, the trees along the stream banks are apt to be numerous and well developed and the valley landscape is generally self-contained and full of interest. Moreover, it is generally true that the lowlands are less valuable for other city purposes than the uplands, so that they can be more cheaply pur-

chased and their withdrawal from occupation interferes less with the productive occupation of the land.

"It is a matter of obvious economy, other things being equal, that lands traversed by permanent surface water channels and subject to occasional floods should be occupied by parks in which the maintenance of an ample open waterway may be an actual benefit and which may be subjected to occasional flooding without serious difficulty or expense, rather than by private property through which a

40. RIVERWAY, BOSTON. WHAT TO DO WITH THE RIVERS.

A typical streamside parkway connecting one park with another.

Public control or ownership of the banks of the streams will work their cure and ensure permanent preservation, as among the most charming features of the scenery. Such public control will not only tend to prevent the dangers to health already mentioned, but it will also have many positive good results. It will give added value to adjacent real estate, which will ensure its occupation by good houses having their *fronts* and not their *back* yards turned towards water side roads. It will eventually provide a whole series of public promenades and playgrounds for the use of the population which tends to crowd into the valleys. It will restore and preserve the attractiveness of the streams for the large class of citizens who take pleasure in boating. It will also provide, since the main streams flow towards the heart of the city, a series of sorely needed pleasant routes leading from the country, through the suburbs to the city, and even to the bay or ocean beyond.

channel can be maintained only as a serious damage or at great cost for walling and filling, and which is bound to suffer heavy flood losses in case the channel ever

proves inadequate. In many cases, too, it will happen that a parkway which follows a stream will provide convenient and pleasant lines of travel on good grades for much the same engineering reasons that have led the railroads to follow the larger valleys."

A CHANCE TO START RIGHT.

(*By Charles Mulford Robinson, Author of Modern Civic Art, Etc.*)

"Parks do more to add to the genuine pleasure of living than any other expenditure that a community can make. A park system benefits all classes, and universally the people take it to their hearts. Of course, the only way to get

41. RIVERWAY, BOSTON.

A typical valley parkway, maintaining a natural surface water channel. A railroad parallels the path to the right, but it is obscured by a mound of soil supporting a plantation.

large results is to buy the land when it is cheap, and the only way to get the best results is to buy it with a view, not to isolated advantages but to a metropolitan system that shall be systematic and logical. All the cities have learned that; but to correct the wrong starts that most of them have made through failure to grasp the true extent of the problem, or through timidity, is proving a very difficult and expensive matter. I am glad that Providence and the surrounding cities and towns still have a chance to start right. But it won't do to delay."

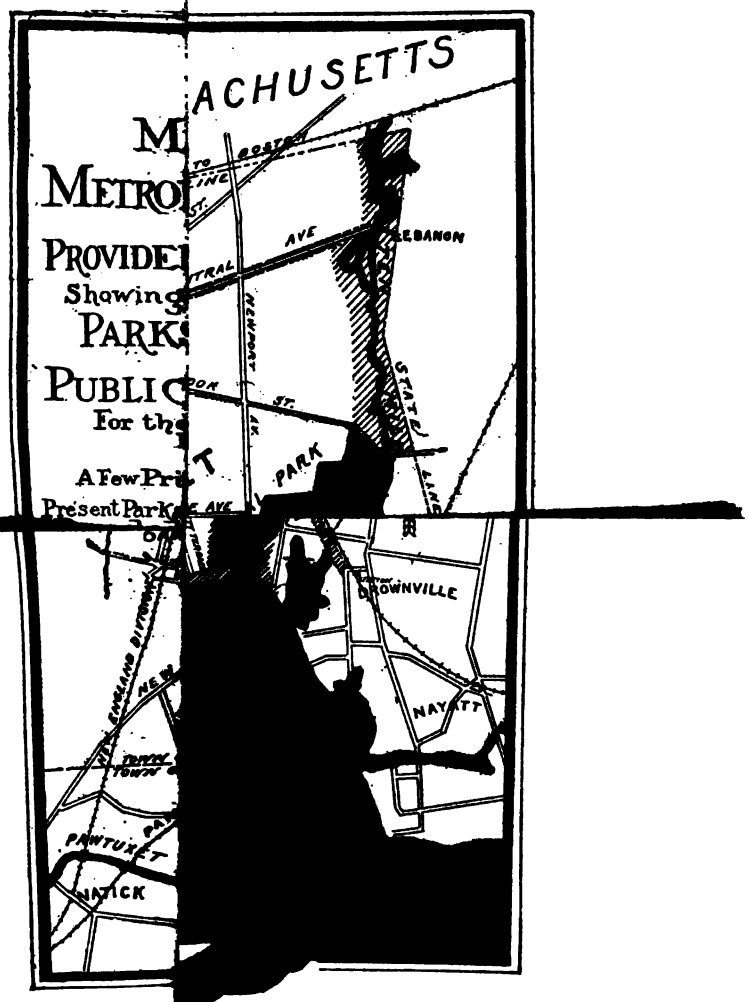
PARK ADVANTAGES OF THIS VICINITY.

(From an Article by G. A. Parker of Hartford, Vice-President of the American Civic Association.)

"While this metropolitan district has some of the greatest of natural advantages, it has made little use of them. First, there is the unsurpassed Narragansett bay, which in the form of the harbor, reaches the heart of the city. Then there are twenty lakes and nine rivers, which for centuries have been carving and moulding the lands into forms of great beauty and attractiveness, preparing a message from the Lord to welcome the coming of man. * * * The slopes of the hills are at places very abrupt, with ledges cropping out and great boulders rendering the scene most picturesque. * * *

"It is said that the gods differ from us mortals by being never behind time, never ahead of time, but always on time, and it would seem as if the gods were favoring Providence, for Providence has grown throughout this whole territory, settling her people here and there by the waterways as opportunity was needed to use their power for making things, and yet where not needed she has kept place after place in much of its pristine beauty. * * * While her hills have been mostly stripped of their great tree growth, yet she has clothed them with a secondary growth that promises to renew their glory, and what is more, she has kept people from settling on them. So well has the Goddess Fortune preserved the good things in store for Providence, hiding them as it were, from the people that they might not destroy them, and,—what will appeal to the thrifty Rhode Islander,—keeping the money value of these lands so low, that now, in the installation of this magnificent system of parks and boulevards not over one hundred acres of high cost land is involved—and less than that number of buildings, all of low price, are included. Truly, where has there ever been another city so fortunate?"

SYSTEM."



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REPORT
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REPORT
upon a system of
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for the
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

SEP 15 1906

WITH COMPLIMENTS OF THE

Board of Metropolitan Park Commissioners

of Rhode Island

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Reports relating to other Park Systems will be gratefully received

PAWTUXET RIVER.—THE FIRST BEND ABOVE THE FALLS.

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD of METROPOLITAN PARK COMMISSIONERS

TO THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS
JANUARY SESSION, A. D. 1906

PROVIDENCE, R. I.
E. L. FREEMAN & SONS, STATE PRINTERS
1906

1906

Members of the Commission.

The President of the Park Commissioners of Providence.—Dr. Fenner H. Peckham

The Mayor of Providence.—Hon. Elisha Dyer.

The Mayor of Pawtucket.—Hon. James H. Higgins.

The Mayor of Central Falls.—Hon. T. H. McNally.

The President of the Town Council of East Providence.—Benjamin Wilson.

The President of the Town Council of Cranston.—Zenas W. Bliss.

The President of the Town Council of Warwick.—George E. Stillman.

The President of the Town Council of Johnston.—Jonathan V. Barnes.

The President of the Town Council of North Providence.—Edgar B. Hurdis.

The President of the Town Council of Lincoln.—George Pierce.

The President of Brown University.—Dr. W. H. P. Faunce.

The President of the Chamber of Commerce (Board of Trade).—Hon. Frederick H. Jackson.

The President of Providence Art Club.—H. Anthony Dyer.

The Director of the Rhode Island School of Design.—Prof. E. B. Homer.

Members Representing the Public Park Association.—Augustine Jones, Alfred Stone, Amasa M. Eaton, Henry A. Barker, and John R. Freeman.

President.—Dr. Fenner H. Peckham; *Vice-President.*—Alfred Stone; *Secretary.*—Henry A. Barker; *Asst. Secretary.*—Edward F. Ely.

Executive Committee.—Alfred Stone, Chairman; Dr. Fenner H. Peckham, Amasa M. Eaton, Henry A. Barker, John R. Freeman; Edward F. Ely (*ex-officio*).

Hon. Albert H. Humes, George W. Parrott, and Dr. E. B. Knight, having been members of the Commission at its organization, by virtue of their offices as mayor of Central Falls, president of the town council of North Providence, and president of the Providence Art Club, respectively, were succeeded by Hon. T. H. McNally, Michael J. Kirby, and H. Anthony Dyer, at the expiration of their terms of office.

Hon. Augustus S. Miller, mayor of Providence, died during his term of office. Hon. Elisha Dyer was elected mayor in November, 1905. Zenas W. Bliss, George E. Stillman, Jonathan V. Barnes, Edgar B. Hurdis, and George Pierce were appointed to succeed Messrs. Arthur E. Austin, Walter R. Hazard, Dr. Ralph H. Shaw, Michael J. Kirby, and Alexander Leslie, as presidents of the town councils of Cranston, Warwick, Johnston, North Providence, and Lincoln, respectively.

"The children seemed to have been forgotten. . . . The failure to provide for the reasonable recreation of the people and especially of the rising generation had been the most efficient cause of the growth of crime and pauperism in New York."—Report of Special Committee on Small Parks, New York City. Abram S. Hewett, Chairman, Jacob A. Riis, Secretary.

Synopsis of the Commissioners' Report.

The report of the Metropolitan Park Commission recites the considerations that influenced its appointment and discusses the peculiar problem of the metropolitan district which demands united action through the intervention of the State, the number of cities and towns which have grown up into a closely related community making joint effort otherwise very difficult or impossible.

The work of the Commission during the past year is described and the natural features of waterways, hills, and shores are described as being unusually available and adaptable to the comfort and happiness and health of the population, although certain, without proper treatment, to become at an early date objects of enormous expense and never ending annoyance.

The plan governing the metropolitan district of Massachusetts is suggested as a model for local guidance. The State is asked to issue the bonds necessary to accomplish the work, but merely as an underwriter,—the cities and towns of the metropolitan district contributing in proportion to their population and resources and the benefits received by each. Therefore, there is to be no permanent cost to the State. The rapid growth of the metropolitan district is described and the speedy disappearance of natural advantages which have been of great service in advancing its prosperity, is asserted to be inevitable unless they are made into a system of public reservations.

The Commissioners believe that the universal and marvellous growth of the park movement is due primarily, not so much to the desire to adorn cities or to add to their taxable value, as to the fact that public reservations furnish the only means by which the masses of the people may continue to enjoy those bounties of nature which are indispensable to the mental, moral and physical well-being of the race.

Less vital, but still of vast importance, are many problems of drainage and transportation and protection of the public water supply that may be happily solved by a beneficent design that utilizes the waste places and at the same time adds much value to all the lands surrounding them.

Acquirement of the land is the first object sought, and the first improvements should be merely in making it accessible and providing simple roads and shelters. The metropolitan plan does not relieve the several municipalities of their obligation to provide certain local playgrounds or small parks in present congested districts, but it is

suggested that when essential parts of the more comprehensive system shall be provided by the action of a single city or town, that credit should be given to that community in the final accounting.

Very long term bonds, for fifty years at least, are recommended, since the improvements they pay for do not deteriorate like public buildings or other objects of municipal expenditure, but on the contrary save vast sums to future generations.

It is requested that the legislature submit to the people, at the next general election, the question of a bond issue of $250,000, which is about one-fourteenth of one per cent. of the present tax value of the metropolitan district, and it is confidently expected with such a sum to do much necessary work and make such a satisfactory showing that the wisdom of the entire plan will be thoroughly demonstrated. The report remarks that the annual cost of such a bond issue to each person of the district is not quite equal to that of three striped sticks of candy.

The report is presented with the unanimous approval of the members of the Commission.

In the Appendix is a detailed statement of the reasons that have guided the selection of the various proposed reservations upon the map, and also an article made up from several reports on metropolitan park systems for other cities where the local considerations were similar. These reports were written by Olmsted Brothers, who have been retained as landscape advisers of the Commission.

The Appendix contains in addition, several other articles and quotations from the best known writers upon the subject under discussion, and a series of brief descriptions of the park systems and the park projects under way in all of the principal cities in the country, the latter being illustrated by a number of colored maps, which were originally prepared under the direction of Andrew Wright Crawford in a report of the Philadelphia Allied organizations. In these maps the green indicates parklands already acquired, and the brown the proposed additions to the various park systems.

Illustrations showing the varied character of the scenery of the district are reproduced from photographs taken by or under the direction of the secretary during the past season, and maps and diagrams prepared by him indicate various improvements which would be brought about or assisted by such a comprehensive project.

The Secretary has also prepared several articles, indicating by a summary of the reports from many cities, the well demonstrated relationship of parks to land values; their usefulness as educators and moral factors, and their efficiency in the prevention of disease and crime.

The large map of the district is believed to be of much interest and value for many purposes.

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Large map drawn at city engineer's office, Providence. Smaller maps and diagrams of metropolitan park system drawn by secretary. Small colored maps of cities prepared under the direction of Andrew Wright Crawford, secretary of the "Allied Organizations of Philadelphia." Illustrations from photographs taken for this report by Henry A. Barker, and by Edward F. Ely, J. W. Auty, George W. Hopkins, and others.

CORRECTION.

Page 47. Central Park, New York, area should be given as 840 acres.

Report of the Commissioners.

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS.

To the Honorable the General Assembly:

The Board of Metropolitan Park Commissioners respectfully presents the following report:

Your Commission has already presented a preliminary report, and, in accordance with the act of the last General Assembly, has continued its labors along the lines indicated in the original act of appointment, and has gathered much information of value and interest to the State as a whole, as well as to the metropolitan district.

A majority of the Commissioners were appointed as members in order to insure proper representation of the different parts of what has been designated the "metropolitan district," and to secure full consideration of the subject from the various commercial, artistic, and educational standpoints, and all of them approached the work in an impartial spirit and without fixed preconceived ideas. The members who were named to represent the Public Park Association had, however, for many years been actively engaged upon a study of the park needs of the district and how they could be satisfied.

Work of the Commission.

The Commission has since the presentation of its preliminary report held a number of meetings; has made numerous tours of investigation to many parts of the metropolitan district; has secured, in an advisory capacity, the services of Olmsted Brothers, of Brookline, Massachusetts, whose experience with most of the more notable park systems of the country has given them the highest rank as expert advisers; and with Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted members of the Commission have inspected much of the territory.

The executive committee has, as a rule, held weekly meetings, and with the approval of the entire Commission has prepared the map upon which many months of labor have been expended, and which accompanies this report.

Scope of Inquiry.

The Commission has considered that it was created because there was no existing agency by which to accomplish the work assigned to it and that the scope of its inquiry was limited to problems that could not properly be solved by the ordinary methods of State or local action, since the limits of desirable park areas and their connecting thoroughfares were not confined to municipal boundaries. It is generally agreed that we can not have too many open areas near the homes of the people, but such small parks and playgrounds as are distinctly of a local or neighborhood character—that have no relation to the system as a whole and lie entirely within the borders of any one municipality—should be provided by individual cities and towns. The Commission recognizes, however, that a comprehensive system of public areas could not be created by any of the cities and towns without infringing upon some of the others. (See Appendix, page 42.)

The Metropolitan District.

United action is needed, for these municipalities are no longer isolated from each other, as is clearly demonstrated by a study of the map of the metropolitan district. This map covers less than one-eighth of the territory of the State, but represents an area that contains the dwelling places of about three-quarters of its population. Places which have seemed most worthy of consideration as public reservations are indicated upon the map, but time has not sufficed to make a definite choice among the features for all the outlying districts. Careful study has been given to the more closely built-up sections and the rapidly developing ones which demand speedy attention. Many of the proposed reservations are now, and have been for many years, extensively used for the enjoyment of the people; many of the most beautiful are very close to congested regions which need them most, and are natural park lands which require small expenditure to make them in the highest degree useful and available.

Engineering Problems Avoided.

It is evident that the use of such places for any other than park purposes would involve great burdens of expenditure in solving difficult problems of drainage and grading, and notwithstanding this expense they would almost inevitably become occupied by all that is most objectionable and undesirable in a city's growth.

This consideration of municipal economy is especially important in cities of uneven contour, diversified, like our own, by many steep hills, ponds, and river valleys, and low marshy lands. To withdraw from the market these picturesque places, which are especially desirable for park uses and unfitted for

residential or business purposes, would avoid the repetition of costly enterprises like the "Brook Street District" and "Shoo Fly Village" improvements, which resulted in great financial loss to the city of Providence.

Photographs and Plans.

In order that a useful record might be available of the characteristics of all parts of the district, the secretary has personally photographed, or otherwise procured, nearly fifteen hundred pictures of the places under consideration and has added them to the previous collection.

A series of thirty-six plans has been prepared, generally upon a scale of three hundred feet to the inch, showing, according to the latest information, the contour of the land, the layout of the streets, and the location of the existing buildings within the whole metropolitan district.

Possibilities.

By these it is made evident that great possibilities still exist for the creation of a creditable system of pleasure grounds and valuable public reservations, and that the entire project would call for the removal of not over seventy or eighty buildings—generally of a very inexpensive character. Of the land required, not more than one hundred acres is of any considerable commercial value.

The Commission does not find that any other large community in the country possesses more favoring opportunities than are found in this district.

The Connecting Links.

In the connecting roadways between the proposed reservations alternate ways have been suggested in several cases. Further study would doubtless perfect these connections in many of their de-

tails. Careful consideration has, however, been given to the experience of other cities that have established comprehensive park systems, and the principles that have come to be well recognized and demonstrated as correct have been closely followed and applied to local needs. In this connection it can be said that Mr. Olmsted has not only visited the territory, but has carefully studied the plan and has given to the same, as here presented, his unqualified approval.

The problem that confronts us, owing to the fact that a number of adjoining cities and towns have become welded together into a single community, is similar to that which existed in the neighborhood of Boston and was met by the creation of the metropolitan park district of Massachusetts. (See page 42.) This district has no power of its own to raise money, but the State comes to its relief and issues the necessary bonds with which to secure the land and to lay out and maintain a comprehensive and ample park system for the whole community. The State as a whole, even though the great majority of its people are directly benefited thereby, is not put to any permanent expense, as the various cities and towns contribute their proportionate share of the annual charge for the work. This method for securing the necessary joint action of the several cities and towns has been found thoroughly successful in practice.

Rate of Growth.

The growth of the Rhode Island metropolitan district is large and very steady. The outlying district reached by rapid transit lines, and especially that area within the zone of the five-cent fare and within a half-hour's travel from Exchange place, is rapidly building up, and must continue for many decades to become ever more closely populated. One result of this will soon be-

come evident in the withdrawal from time to time of the various recreation places that are now open to the public.

The statement heretofore made by members of the Commission, that this district regularly doubles its population every twenty-two or twenty-three years, is borne out by the recent census.

Causes of Local Prosperity.

The people of this State have been richly blessed by the gifts of the Almighty, who has surrounded them with the fairest scenes of river and hill and bay, quiet lake and pleasant woodland. Opportunities have hitherto existed in rich variety for those forms of recreation needed by the people, to give refreshment to tired souls and contribute to the efficiency of labor, and they have undoubtedly contributed much to the prosperity of the varied manufactures of the State.

The people of this metropolitan district have had abundant chance for bathing and boating, for youthful games and outdoor sports, and great advantages which many cities have spent millions in the endeavor to artificially provide, were theirs freely to enjoy.

The shores of a superb waterway are well within their reach. The wooded hills are close at hand. The vacant fields and the banks of the streams invite full enjoyment. Here and there are old forts and historic places that form the shrine of many a patriotic pilgrimage. Nature has been so richly beneficent that her gifts are perhaps lightly regarded, and even now it may be hard to realize that the things that have always existed and have had such an influence upon the daily lives of our people will not always remain. In the spreading of the settlement, such places must soon become ruined or obliterated. The great majority

of the people have neither the leisure nor the means to travel or to leave for any considerable time the vicinity of their workshops or factories or stores, and so the former substitutes for parks must be preserved as real parks.

Is it not probable that the supremacy of this community in those special directions which call for art and skill and inventive ingenuity has been stimulated by such very unusual natural endowments?

Well-being of the People at Stake.

Valid and appealing as are many of the arguments made for the creation of public reservations, such as their desirability for adornment; their use in teaching or increasing the love of beauty, and attracting those desirable residents whose opportunities allow them to choose pleasant places to live in; their service in bringing tourists and visitors from neighboring States; supplying pleasant drives and useful connecting highways, and adding to the tax valuation and general prosperity;—all of these may seem of minor importance compared with those considerations which deal so closely with the health and strength and well-being of the great mass of the people, and which imperatively demand some scene beyond the dismal, crowded tenement street. Happy homes and pleasant surroundings are the two great factors that make for a contented and industrious people, whose brains shall guide their hands. These conditions should be preserved that our industries may not decline.

A Test of Civilization.

President Roosevelt has recently said that "the prime difference between civilized and uncivilized people is that among civilized peoples each generation works not only for its own well-being, but

for the well-being of generations yet unborn. If we permit the natural resources of this land to be destroyed, we thereby prove our unfitness to stand in the forefront of civilized peoples."

Nature has so richly endowed the site of these cities that we shall indeed be deserving the reproach of civilization if we allow the opportunities that we now possess to be forever lost.

Few other enterprises affect in such a direct and intimate way the daily lives of so large a proportion of the people. Medical testimony and scientific authority declare that proper park systems are necessary for public health and happiness. Their practical and financial advantages have been fully demonstrated within the last generation.

The First Step.

The Commission believes its first duty is to secure such parts of the natural park lands as will otherwise most rapidly disappear, and, so far as possible, to provide for the preservation of those valuable natural assets, particularly in tracts which extend within the borders of two or more municipalities.

The few remaining groves that suggest the forest primeval to city dwellers should be secured right speedily and guarded from fire and from the wood chopper, and ways should be opened to make them accessible. In several portions of the proposed park lands there are noble trees and splendid groves, such as the Arcade woods and the Lincoln Forest, which, unless protected from fire, may at any moment be destroyed forever. Even during the preparation of these plans, much of the magnificent Bradley woods, the fine grove of pines upon the Seekonk shore near Omega Pond, the over-arching trees at the first rapids of the Pawtuxet—which are still pictured in the art store windows from Maine to California—and many other

exquisite bits of woodland growth, have succumbed to the ever busy axe, and generally for no better reason than for the firewood that they contained. The Ten Mile river and the Pawtuxet, the numerous natural lakes, and most of the reservoirs and artificial ponds are already beautiful and require no expenditure, except for making them accessible by simple roads and paths, and occasional bridges, and the provision of seats and shelters. Sometimes the removal of a barbed wire fence, the building of a simple footbridge, the making of a path through a thicket, or a bit of causeway across a piece of marshy land will open to the public acres of unrealized treasures.

The shores of the ponds, and those streams that are used for public water supply, for water power, or for ice gathering, need not be interfered with. Indeed, the public ownership of the shores will do much to protect the water and ice supply and contribute to the interests of the manufacturers who use the water power.

A little connecting link here and there, like the proposed road across the narrow part of Watchemoket Cove in East Providence, would open the way for many a long and delightful drive now wholly impossible. Existing features are so perfectly adapted to park purposes that elaborate and expensive creations may be almost wholly avoided, and many of them could hardly be improved by all the art and skill of the landscape architect. (See Appendix, "Description of Features in the Metropolitan District.")

What will it Cost?

The experience of many cities indicates that the cost will be less than nothing in the long run. A proper park expenditure has been found to be a desirable investment and one that usually more than

repays the outlay. A future sale of the real estate included in the park area—which is a preposterous suggestion—would in most cases return more than all the cost, but park investments are not made for pecuniary profit.

Your Commission believes that a small sum judiciously spent will provide many useful and necessary features and make such a satisfactory showing as to demonstrate to the people of the State the wisdom of a continuance of the policy. A beginning, such as has been outlined, would place the project in a position to receive bequests of money or land, and would enable private owners to transfer property to public use, as many have indicated a disposition to do whenever a properly comprehensive project might be assured.

At the same time, those parts of the metropolitan park system that are so situated that they may be acquired by local action, as, for example, the proposed addition at Fields Point and the West River, or Corliss, Park in Providence; or the Ten Mile River reservation in Pawtucket, could be added by the municipalities and credit given in the final accounting.

Without Cost to the State.

Since the metropolitan district has no political existence, the Commission recommends and requests the State to act as "underwriter" in a bond issue of $250,000, with the proviso that the interest upon these bonds and the amount of the sinking fund necessary to extinguish them shall be paid by the several cities and towns of the district in proportion to their benefits, resources, and population, as is done in the metropolitan park district of Massachusetts.

These park bonds should be made for at least forty, and preferably for fifty, years, since the improvements they pay for

do not deteriorate with age but are of constantly increasing usefulness to each succeeding generation forever.

Rhode Island bonds are in such demand that an issue at 3½ per cent. would probably command a premium.* At 3½ per cent. the interest on $250,000 amounts to $8,750 per year, and $1,844 applied annually to the sinking fund for fifty years would extinguish the debt.

The annual cost of a $250,000 bond issue to the people of the district would be almost inappreciable. It would be divided among a present population of 360,000;—200,000 of whom belong in Providence. The taxable valuation of the property in this district is about $350,000,000, and of this about $222,000,000 is in Providence. The annual cost to each person would be 2.95 cents, which almost equals the price of three striped sticks of candy. The proportion is really a fragment larger in Providence and a bit smaller in the suburbs, because the tax valuation of the city is greater for each person. At the present valuation, it would entail a tax of about three-tenths of a cent on each $100.

The proceeds of the bonds being used to buy land would to a great extent go to the people of the district, who, it is presumed, would re-invest it in other property, so that there would be nothing lost. Valuation would be merely shifted.

Many cities, especially in the West, levy a special park tax. Often, as in the case of Minneapolis, the rate is one mill per $1.00, and it is seldom less than one-half of a mill. A tax of one-half of a mill levied in our metropolitan district would provide for a loan of over $4,000,000, a sum far in excess of any estimate

* That this is the case is proven by the sale of $950,000 in 3 per cent. bonds for State Armory and State Highways, March 27, 1906, at a premium.

ever made, as the natural conditions make our needed outlay much less than in most other places where park work is under way.

Conclusion.

The total expenses incurred by the Commission between April 1, 1905, and February 1, 1906, as attested by proper vouchers, were $1,148.62. This amount, plus $299.65 which had been previously expended, includes the cost of the maps, illustrations, etc., used in the preliminary report. The preparation of the present report is not included in the above amount, but will be met with the balance of the appropriations, which to date have been $3,000.

Your Commission respectfully requests an appropriation by this legislature of $2,500, in order that it may devote the ensuing year to a more careful examination of those portions of the district that have thus far received the least attention; to the perfecting of its map; to detailed study with its landscape advisers of the various plans which it has outlined, and to the procuring of proper surveys of such land as it may seem feasible to obtain.

The Commission proposes to hold public meetings in various parts of the district, exhibiting such plans as have been proposed, and soliciting advice at these meetings as to local needs and opportunities.

It desires to co-operate with those who have undeveloped land in and around the metropolitan district, in order that such land may be laid out as far as possible to conform to the comprehensive plan now proposed.

Your Commission believes that there is a real interest and demand for a substantial beginning of the work, and therefore

recommends that the question of a bond issue of $250,000, to be expended at the discretion of the legislature, for the establishment of a metropolitan park system, be submitted to the people at the next general election.*

A favorable prospect of being able to make an actual beginning in the near future would enable the Commission to secure options on more favorable terms, it is believed, than would ever again be possible, and thus preserve advantages that otherwise may be forever lost, the saving of which is of great importance to the future welfare of most of the inhabitants of the State.

All of which is respectfully submitted by vote of the Board of Metropolitan Park Commissioners, at their meeting, February 27, 1906.

(The President of the Park Commissioners of Providence)	FENNER H. PECKHAM.
(The Mayor of Providence)	ELISHA DYER.
(The Mayor of Pawtucket)	JAMES H. HIGGINS.
(The Mayor of Central Falls)	T. H. McNALLY.
(The President of the Town Council of East Providence)	BENJAMIN WILSON.
(The President of the Town Council of Cranston)	ZENAS W. BLISS.
(The President of the Town Council of Warwick)	GEO. E. STILLMAN.
(The President of the Town Council of Johnston)	JONATHAN V. BARNES.
(The President of the Town Council of North Providence)	EDGAR B. HURDIS.
(The President of the Town Council of Lincoln)	GEORGE PIERCE.

* This recommendation has now been approved by the Legislature. See Resolution, page 15.

(The President of Brown University)	W. H. P. FAUNCE.
(The President of the Providence Chamber of Commerce (Board of Trade)	FREDERICK H. JACKSON.
(The President of the Providence Art Club)	H. ANTHONY DYER.
(The Director of the Rhode Island School of Design)	E. B. HOMER.
(Members representing the Public Park Association)	AUGUSTINE JONES, ALFRED STONE, AMASA M. EATON, HENRY A. BARKER, JOHN R. FREEMAN.

SHALL THIS BE THE HISTORY OF OUR PARK SYSTEM?

The EVOLUTION of a PARK

THE WAY OF MANY CITIES

THE GREAT CITIES ARE NOW TEARING DOWN BLOCKS OF BUILDINGS TO ... PROVIDE BREATHING SPACES - THAT ONCE IN ALL THEIR NATURAL BEAUTY MIGHT HAVE BEEN BOUGHT FOR A FEW ... CENTS PER FOOT. .....

(A.D. 1905 POPULATION 360,000)
NATURAL PARK LANDS STILL REMAIN UNSPOILED

(A.D. 1930 POPULATION 750,000)
NO PLAYGROUND BUT THE STREETS.

IN NEW YORK - MULBERRY BEND & SEWARD PARK - SIMILAR TO THIS. BOSTON PARK. IN THE PICTURE COST NEARLY ... $1000,000 PER ... ACRE. .....

A.D. 1950 POPULATION 1400,000
THE PARTIAL RESTORATION of the PLAYGROUNDS

THE POPULATION OF OUR OWN ... METROPOLITAN DISTRICT DOUBLES ABOUT ONCE IN 22 YEARS

1. The evils of delay are thus illustrated in many cities. At first, the unspoiled park lands, which little money would buy. A generation later acres of dismal tenements; the children must play in the streets. Another generation and the need of playgrounds has become insistent and unbearable. It costs millions to provide even a poor imitation of what ought never to have been lost. "When the city has been growing to greatness for a hundred years under a wrong and stupid plan, it will of course cost money to set it right." (*New York Times.*)

FUDICIE

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

HOUSE RESOLUTION 315.

(SUBSTITUTE A.)

Passed by House of Representatives, April 19, 1906.
Passed by Senate in Concurrence, April 20, 1906.

JANUARY SESSION, A. D. 1906.

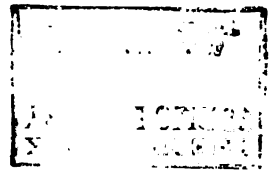
RESOLUTION SUBMITTING TO THE ELECTORS A PROPOSITION TO ISSUE BONDS FOR A SYSTEM OF PUBLIC RESERVATIONS AND PARKS.

Resolved, That the following proposition be submitted to the people for their approval or rejection at the general election to be held on the Tuesday next following the first Monday in November, 1906.

METROPOLITAN PARK LOAN.

Shall the general assembly be authorized and directed to provide for the issue of state bonds not to exceed the amount of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars for the acquirement and improvement of real estate for public reservations and parks in the Metropolitan Park District of Providence Plantations; these bonds to be issued from time to time in such amounts and upon such terms as the general assembly may hereafter determine?

THE
PUBLIC
ASTOR
TILD



The Beginnings of Degradation
Scenes along the Pawtuxet

A · LITTLE · RIVER · IN · A · CITY

"In the first place, the river banks have a naturally wild character; inevitably beautiful until man spoils it. Then comes the city, andwe get the familiar aspect of the river meandering through its mud banks, its sides affording a resting-place for marble yards, abattoirs, innumerable offensive manufacturing establishments, and all sorts of hideous things; a condition which I venture to think is temporary.

"Let us think of the thing from a financial point of view. What is more retardent of land values than a slimy river bank? Think of the things in the neighborhood of it! Think of the low value of the land! Think of the space, for one-eighth of a mile back on each side of the river as a rule, given up to slums! given up to old buildings, and old sheds of no value! given up to half-used wharves!"—*Frank Miles Day.*

The Upper Woonasquatucket
What Nature has done for the river

The Result of 270 Years of Civilization
Some Rivers in Providence

The Lower Woonasquatucket
What man has done to the river

APPENDIX.

The Need of Additional Parks and General Considerations Controlling their Extent and Distribution.

NOTE.—The following chapters, taken from the reports by Olmsted Brothers, landscape architects, upon the Metropolitan Park Systems designed for Baltimore, Portland, (Oregon,) and other cities, apply with equal appropriateness to the Metropolitan Park System of Providence Plantations.

The need of increasing park areas.

When a city grows, streets and blocks multiply automatically, as it were, whether planned in a far-sighted way for the best common interests, or left wholly to private initiative; but open spaces such as parks can be secured only by joint action; every generation during which the city grows must exert itself to add more of them, keeping pace with the erection of new buildings and the extension of streets. A city which is growing and which expects to continue its growth can no more afford to rest on its past accomplishments as to parks than it can get along without increasing its police force, for the multiplication of buildings and streets will in time overwhelm its allotments of public lands, however liberal these may once have been. The only limit which can be set to need of increase in the park acreage of a city is that which marks the complete cessation of the city's growth.

Rate of increase.

The increase in park area may follow the development of the rest of the city when the need becomes so crying as to be unbearable, in which case the increase is obtained at enormous expense, as in numerous instances in the older parts of large cities which had filled in solidly before the need was recognized.

Ratio of parks to increase of population.

The need of some public open spaces in a town in addition to the streets is so well recognized that it needs no restatement; but it is well to point out that as a town grows, and the surrounding open country becomes more and more remote, not only from the centre of the town, but from all the

great and growing mass of people who live between the centre and the outer zone, the ratio of park area to the population should be increased.

In a closely built city of 50,000 people, where no one lives more than three-quarters of a mile from the surrounding open country,—while it is very desirable to have numerous open spaces scattered through the town for the sake of making it attractive and airy, and while various local grounds are needed for special purposes, such as playgrounds, yet anyone who finds these insufficient or who needs the refreshment of getting out into the green fields, away from the insistent sights and sounds of the city, has only to take a fifteen minutes' walk to get what he wants. For such a place, except in anticipation of future growth, to spend much money in providing itself with a large park would seem needless extravagance; but suppose the same town with the same population to be surrounded by a congeries of other similar towns, marching house to house and forming a great metropolitan community like London or New York, encircled by suburbs and by the places of the well-to-do upon which the general public are rigidly prevented from trespassing—then the real unblighted country is so far away that most of our 50,000 people will be compelled to live along from year's end to year's end without a glimpse of it. If their condition is to approach what it was in the former case, the public park area open to their use must be greatly increased.

Conclusions as to park area needed.

Leaving out of consideration for the present the very serious question how fast the parks should be acquired in any district, the most profitable distribution of park areas in relation to the rest of the city will ultimately be somewhat as follows: Small playgrounds and squares, more numerous than in most parts of London, New York, and Boston, where increase is now felt to be necessary, and probably about equivalent to the distribution in the central part of Paris; large parks and reservations, about equivalent to the distribution at London and at Boston, more liberal than at New York, and perhaps less so than in the suburban district west of Paris, where an unreasonable proportion of the land seems to be withdrawn from productive use; connecting parkways, about equivalent to the distribution in Boston, where further increase is still thought desirable. No boule-

vards of this character are shown on the Paris map, and neither New York or London has had enough experience of the value of such connections to afford a criterion of their proper extent, although in both their increase is contemplated.

Exercise.

Provision for exercise in the open air is a matter of vital importance as cities increase in size and density of population, and as more and more people come to be engaged in confining occupations, while quick and cheap transportation constantly reduces the amount of exercise which people are compelled to take as an incident to their daily work.

In a general way this is recognized, especially as regards children, whose development into healthy and useful members of the community depends quite as much upon physical as upon mental exercise. The need of providing mental training at the expense of the community has long been recognized, because the efficiency of the individual is so immediately and completely dependent upon it; whereas neglect of physical exercise, in a community where mental ability is of prime importance, produces only a general and indeterminate lowering of an individual's efficiency that does not bring home its lesson in a striking manner except in special cases. It can not be doubted, however, that in the long run, since we are evidently destined to be city-dwelling people, we are bound to degenerate physically unless we take adequate means to build ourselves up. We are beginning to realize this and the gymnasium is working its way into the school system. The gymnasium and the calisthenic class are to physical development what the schoolhouse is to mental development, but while mental play is provided for under the stimulus of the kindergarten, physical play under good conditions can only be provided for in cities by public playgrounds.

Playgrounds.

Many schools have playgrounds, but they are seldom large enough, for as school buildings have grown in size to meet increasing demands, playgrounds have generally been encroached upon instead of being enlarged to correspond. If it is agreed that it is almost as important for the city to provide adequate playground accommodations as it is to provide schoolrooms, there is apparent need of very greatly increasing the present playground areas.

Grounds for little children.

Whether in connection with school grounds or elsewhere, there should be in each neighborhood a space, not open to the hurly-burly of large children, where mothers may take young tots, mostly under the school age, to get out-of-door play and exercise. A lawn, if well cared for, will stand their usage and is of the greatest value for them to play about upon. But for these youngsters, even more than for the older children, it is needful to offer something to play with, and nothing is more useful than a pile of clean sand, especially if water is near at hand to dabble in. A small shallow basin in which they can safely wade and paddle gives to hundreds of city children an amount of healthful play that is cheaply bought at the price of setting apart certain areas for their exclusive use.

Athletic fields.

On the other hand, for the older boys and young men, as the city grows, there are needed outdoor gymnasia and places for athletic sports. Some of these needs are cared for by private enterprise through clubs and associations, but there are many who have not the means or the organizing power to secure such grounds for themselves, and the city can better afford to act as their agent and supply them with athletic grounds than to have them use their surplus energy in ways less useful to themselves and to the community. Grounds of this class should include ball fields, running tracks, places for jumping, vaulting, throwing the hammer and quoits, bowling, and the like.

Other exertive recreations.

Other forms of exertive recreation could be easily named, such as swimming and the speeding of horses. Public bathing places play a very important part in the summer recreation of many cities, and they have a value which cries loudly for their improvement and increase.

Incidental exercise.

But in addition to this systematic exercise, there is a great deal of incidental exercise under pleasant conditions in the open air and sunlight which may be provided for in parks. Thousands of people who are in need of regular exercise and could not be induced to go to a playground or gymnasium for their health alone, will go walking or bicycling or horseback if the pill of exercise is sugar-coated by additional attractions.

The gregarious tendency of many people when out for recreation, and the pleasure which they take in joining a throng of strangers, and walking up and down in company with them, is too obvious to need more than mention.

Many people whose ordinary interests and enjoyments lie quite apart from crowds, feel an impulse, nevertheless, whenever they see a throng, to join it. In every city there are some places which people frequent merely for the sake of seeing and being seen of the crowd.

Promenades.

To meet this want, some places are needed where people can stroll comfortably in large numbers, where others can drive near at hand, and yet others can sit and watch the passers-by. Shade is a requisite, and broad and nearly level paths and roads. Beyond these requirements nothing definite is needed, but that the general aspect of the place shall be cheerful, attractive, and well-kept.

The proposed improvement of the Woonasquatucket banks, in the centre of Providence (see plans 5 and 6) would in time create a promenade of surpassing convenience and attraction to take the place of a repulsive condition which everybody shuns and avoids. Other popular promenades would naturally be the boulevard from Roger Williams Park to Fields Point, and the one in East Providence from Fort Hill south.

Neighborly recreation.

For the most part, however, the larger parks are not used in this gregarious fashion, but in a way that has been called neighborly. The family picnic of a Sunday in a large park is the type of this sort of pleasure, and it is one of the most valuable in its restfulness and refreshment that can be afforded in a social way to tired city workers.

IMPORTANCE OF MUNICIPAL PARKS.

A liberal provision of parks in a city is one of the surest manifestations of the intelligence, degree of civilization and progressiveness of its citizens. While there are many things, both small and great, which may contribute to the beauty of a great city, unquestionably one of the greatest is a comprehensive system of parks and parkways.

Must be comprehensively planned.

As in the case of almost every complex work composed of varied units, economy, efficiency, symmetry, and completeness are likely to be secured only when the system as a whole is planned comprehensively and the purposes to be accomplished defined clearly in advance. Otherwise, valuable opportunities may be overlooked, disproportionate efforts may be expended in the accomplishment of particular objects of relatively minor importance while others more vital may be ignored or slighted. The units of a park system generally recognized are city squares, playgrounds, small or neighborhood parks, large or suburban parks, scenic reservations, boulevards and parkways.

City squares are comparatively small, ornamental grounds, usually dominated by surrounding buildings and necessarily more or less intimately related to surrounding and abutting streets. Hence, they are usually and more appropriately improved formally and symmetrically and often with prominent architectural and sculptural features. They may be even so extremely artificial as to be without trees, flowers, or grass. Few cities have anywhere near as many ornamental squares as they should. It is particularly desirable that a city should have several of its principal buildings facing upon a large public square.

For examples, consider the plans for the new civic centres in Washington, Cleveland, St. Louis, San Francisco, Hartford, etc., and the opportunities for similar treatment offered by Exchange place.

Playgrounds are primarily selected and improved for particular forms of recreation, and only such beauty and ornamentation is allowable as will not unduly interfere with their usefulness for their intended purpose. As the noise of those who use them makes them somewhat objectionable to neighbors, it is often best to combine them with public squares in such a way as to partially separate and screen their strictly utilitarian parts from adjoining streets and buildings, as in the case of Charlesbank in Boston.

Urban or neighborhood parks include public pleasure grounds of a variety of sizes and styles. They may be informal in general design, but more or less filled with formal and artificial details like the Public Garden

in Boston. Neighborhood parks are large enough to contain naturalistic scenery, but not large enough to enable the visitor to enjoy fully the feeling of escape from city sights and sounds.

The smaller playgrounds and neighborhood parks of which it is generally conceded there should be provided at least one to every square mile, are within the convenient jurisdiction of the local authorities, and therefore have not been considered, except incidentally, by the Metropolitan Park Commission. The metropolitan park system, as here outlined, would provide playground facilities in many districts, but there would still remain certain wards of Providence and Pawtucket where the cities must make provision before every vacant lot is gone.

The True Purpose of a Large Public Park.

BY JOHN C. OLMSTED.

Relief from the nervous strain of an artificial city life is afforded in no way so agreeably and conveniently as by a ramble amid the natural scenery of a large park and by the leisurely contemplation of the landscape. There are many workers in a city who suffer more or less from nervous strain, though often they are not fully aware of it. Where a large public park, with ample provision of natural scenery, has been created, it has never failed to be much frequented for this purpose and to afford untold benefit to those who use it.

By a large public park is meant one large enough to contain a complete natural landscape, where one may stroll over hill and dale, across meadows and through woods, always amid natural surroundings; where one may come again and again without becoming familiar with all its interesting localities and features; where many thousands of visitors may be enjoying the scenery at the same time without crowding each other; where those who especially seek seclusion may find parts so remote from the boundaries that even if city houses are not completely hidden, they are reduced in the distant perspective to inconspicuous proportions as compared with the foliage of trees and other natural objects in the foreground; so remote that the roar of street traffic is less noticeable than the songs of birds and sounds of insects, or the rustle of leaves stirred by the breeze.

Too often, through lack of appreciation of the true purpose of a large public park, the grading which must be done, owing to mistaken ideas as to economy, or owing to personal preference for artificiality, is made as regular and unnatural as possible, so that what might have been done in harmony with the natural scenery antagonizes it and greatly lessens its value.

An extent of natural scenery sufficient to afford the sense of quiet and seclusion so beneficial to the city worker can only be secured in a large park. Hence this should be the essential characteristic of a large park. No number of small parks can possibly answer the same purpose, however useful and even necessary they may be for other reasons.

It is no doubt true that the majority of the visitors to a large public park on a holiday seek some positive amusement and prefer artificial attractions, and that they tend rather to avoid than to seek the secluded natural parts of the park. This can not be justly used as an argument in favor of destroying or injuring the beautiful natural scenery by introducing artificial attractions into it when such attractions could perfectly well be provided in the smaller parks or in special amusement grounds, which could usually be much nearer the centre of population, and therefore could be used, by more people, more frequently and more cheaply.

Parkways.

Parkways are of variable types, ranging from a decorated street to a long and narrow rural park used mainly as a line of communication between parks. The first essential of parkways is that they should avoid the petty annoyances and danger of ordinary street travel, that they should cross at grade as few lines of commercial traffic as possible, that they should have comfortable pavements for driving, riding, and walking, and that they should have adequate shade in summer.

A connected system of parks and parkways is manifestly far more useful than a series of isolated parks. Delaware Park, in Buffalo, is an example of a park with handsome boulevards forming approaches from the city and connecting it with Humboldt Park in one direction, Gates Circle in another, and Delaware avenue and The Front in another. Washington Park, Chicago, has its two imposing approaches in Drexel Boulevard

and Grand Boulevard, and its boulevard connection with Jackson Park and the West Side parks. The broad avenues of Washington are admirable examples of boulevards because the houses are kept back from the sidewalks by turf strips upon which houses can not be built,—although porches, bay windows, and other projections are very properly permitted,—and also because they have ornamental circles and squares at turning points and often begin or end at important buildings.

PARKS AND PARKWAYS SHOULD BE LOCATED AND IMPROVED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF BEAUTIFUL NATURAL SCENERY.

Only recently has it begun to be realized what enormous advantages are gained by locating parks and parkways so as to take advantage of beautiful scenery. The most expensive large parks, Central Park and Prospect Park, were located without taking advantage of the magnificent natural landscapes of the rivers and bays which distinguish New York and Brooklyn. There are many similar cases. Formerly people built with the backs of their houses upon the rivers and lakes, thus not only excluding the public from continuous access to them but ruining their beauty. Where land along the banks of rivers or along the shores of a lake can in a city be fairly well spared from commercial uses, public squares, parks, and parkways should be located upon them. Extremely steep and rough hills and bluffs have often been occupied for dwellings and other buildings, (as at Pittsburg, San Francisco, and many other cities,) when they should have been taken for picturesque recreation grounds with drives above, commanding magnificent views, as at Riverside and Morningside Parks in New York.

The steep slopes of Neutaconkanut and Stump Hills, with their commanding views, suggest such opportunities for drives on their long summits; the tops of bluffs like the one below Fort Hill, and the others overlooking the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck Valleys, should have avenues overlooking recreation grounds below.

PARKS SHOULD SECURE SANITARY ADVANTAGES AND SOLVE DRAINAGE PROBLEMS.

Valley parks and parkways.

In addition to taking advantage of beautiful natural scenery, parks and parkways may often be located so as to secure very important sanitary advantages through the improvement of ill-drained areas, particularly low-lying lands on lake shores or along rivers subject to floods.

From the landscape point of view, it frequently happens that a great deal of charming scenery is to be found along the stream; the water itself is pleasing, the trees are apt to be numerous and well developed, and the valley landscape is self-contained and full of interest. Moreover, it is generally true that the lowlands are less valuable for other city purposes than the uplands, so that they can be more cheaply purchased, and their withdrawal from occupation interferes less with the productive occupation of the land.

General advantages of parking the banks of streams.

From the engineering point of view, the public ownership of the natural channels through which the surface water of large territories must run off is of great advantage. Under private occupation of the stream banks, neglect and encroachment are almost certain to obliterate the minor channels and constrict the larger. With the growing proportion of roofs, streets, and other impervious surfaces, the discharge of rain water at the same time becomes more and more rapid and complete and the two processes finally culminate in more or less serious local floods. Every growing city has had its experience with this evil, and where warning has not been taken in time, the floods have often been very disastrous, destroying millions of dollars worth of property. The rain water which during the past ages has been able to erode the valleys out of the substance of the hills and to form these natural channels of discharge for itself, will continue to fall, and since it must be carried off with ever-increasing promptness, will require wider and wider channels to carry the occasional great floods, while at the same time the increasing land values tempt private owners to narrow them by encroachments.

The remedy of condemning narrow rights-of-way and constructing under-

ground pipes and conduits answers very well for the small channels, but as these unite the cost of constructing conduits of sufficient capacity becomes increasingly enormous, and *the saving to be effected by merely preserving the natural surface channels* with minor improvements, runs up into the millions of dollars. Their sloping banks and adjacent open flat land can not be built on, and it can not be left in irresponsible private hands, but it can be used to great advantage for park purposes. The actual channel of the stream affords space for air and sunlight and may generally be kept pleasant to look on, while adjacent slopes subject to overflow only upon extraordinary occasions, may be used for park purposes almost as freely as if they served no other purposes. (See illustrations 4 and 5.)

Such improvements add greatly to the value of adjoining properties, which would otherwise depreciate by the erection on the lowlands of the cheapest class of dwellings or of ugly factories, stables, and other commercial establishments.

The Pawtuxet, Ten Mile, Moshassuck, Pocasset, and several other rivers are subject to overflow and are bordered by low lying and swampy land where the sanitary and drainage problems are as described above by Mr. Olmsted.

PARK SYSTEMS SHOULD BE IN PROPORTION TO OPPORTUNITIES.

Parks attract wealth.

A city having extensive opportunities for parks and parkways should promptly avail itself of them even at serious financial sacrifice. Such a city may wisely mortgage its future wealth much more heavily than a city relatively devoid of such opportunities, because such improvements tend to draw to the city wealth, the taxation of which may more than repay the city for the outlay. The same is true as to sections of a city having natural advantages for residences.

Delays are costly.

It is particularly urgent that a city having beautiful local scenery adapted for parks and parkways should secure the land betimes, lest these natural advantages be destroyed or irreparably injured by the owners. Many of the older cities would now pay very high prices for land which might once have been obtained for a few dollars an acre. Efforts are now being made in

many cities to secure even narrow and unsatisfactory boulevards which might have cost nothing for land, besides being wider and handsomer if those who originally determined the width of the principal streets had drawn the side lines twice as far apart.

The Elmwood avenue improvement, which cost $250,000 to secure very inadequate relief from conditions that were fast becoming intolerable, is a case in point. There is now an absolute certainty that similar conditions will soon develop on many of the main thoroughfares leading into the city, most of which, although not yet closely built up, are already subject to much traffic, and in some instances, like Pawtucket avenue in East Providence, are congested with it.

There are enormous expenditures ahead on many long streets unless the widening process is soon begun.

THE LAND FOR PARK SYSTEMS SHOULD BE PAID FOR BY LONG-TERM LOANS.

There is a very commendable disinclination on the part of legislatures to pass laws authorizing long-term municipal loans. They favor keeping a comparatively low limit on the total amount which cities are allowed to borrow. But the case of loans for purchase of land, especially land for a park system, is very decidedly different from that of loans for most other municipal improvements. In the case of money borrowed for the acquisition of park land, it should be borne in mind that the land is an asset that will be worth more in almost every instance, by the time the loan becomes payable, than the amount of the loan. Moreover, as a general rule, the special increase in the assessors' valuations of adjoining private lands and in the improvements subsequently erected upon them will yield increased taxes sufficient to meet the interest and the annual contributions to the sinking fund of the park-land loan. Of course, there should be limitations, but experience indicates that the limits for park-land loans may safely be set very much higher than for other municipal loans. It requires very little knowledge of municipal finances to satisfy one of the general rule that parks are a better asset when the loan by which they have been acquired becomes payable than school buildings, fire-engine houses, city halls, street improvements, and most other things for which cities borrow money, and

which deteriorate and in time become almost valueless even if they are not destroyed.

PARK SYSTEMS SHOULD BE IMPROVED ACCORDING TO A WELL-STUDIED AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

Park systems, like other large, complex, and costly creations of human intelligence, should be carefully designed by trained men. The absence of a general plan or a failure to comprehend and follow it will result in the hodge-podge of incongruities too often seen in parks. The portions which should be natural are often artificialized unnecessarily by gardening operations or by the introduction of buildings, fountains, and all sorts of ornaments.

Unfortunately, it seems to happen very often that a park is first acquired mainly with a view to providing the beauties of landscape and afterwards has sprinkled over it every sort of thing which people are believed to admire. The result is analogous to the effect of the interior of a curiosity shop as compared with the library of the home of a family of good taste.

Artificial disfigurements.

There seems to be a constant and most pernicious itching among the park commissioners themselves to do something tangible and conspicuous that will mark their administration of the parks, and most unfortunately, they want to locate some building or monument on every commanding site in the poor, unoffending landscape. They feel that there is an aching void and they yearn for a statue or fountain or something striking to put in it, and if nothing expensive offers they are apt to fill the gap by ordering the gardener to stick in a spread eagle or some other loud cry in colored foliage plants. Perhaps they can appreciate good acting or good music, but they would be unable to write the play or compose the music. Yet they will order a wood cleaned of underbrush and feel gratified by the efforts of the gardener in the way of so-called rock work, rustic bridges, formal flower beds in informal surroundings, and by walks leading hither and yon without any purpose that one can discover; and by all the injuries which even good gardeners (because they are mostly mechanics and not artists) will inflict on a park landscape already naturally beautiful or which

needs only native trees and wild bushes in proper places to make it so. Many of the civil engineers employed on park work do even more to injure naturally beautiful scenery, because their operations in grading and road building and bridges are apt to be larger, and more conspicuous, and so expensive that once done it is practically impossible to change them, and because most of their training has been in smashing beautiful landscape with railroads, streets, dams, and bridges, and other constructions, all of which might at a very slight additional cost, be made beautiful in form and location, even if without ornament. But the civil engineer who should be caught by his employers spending money for beauty, as, for instance, by curving a road around a hill instead of cutting through it, or by having vines and wild flowers planted on rough railroad slopes, would be reprimanded if not discharged.

STEEP LANDS MAKE COSTLY HOUSE LOTS.

From the Portland Report.

"Having pointed out the extraordinary opportunities possessed by your city for a comprehensive system of picturesque parks and parkways, . . . some comment may be worth while on the peculiar conditions which make it desirable to take for park purposes a much larger amount of land in narrow strips and small pieces along the western hilly margin of the city than would be desirable in most other cities. Those who have no interest in the ownership of these lands can hardly fail to agree that they are neither economical or desirable as building sites for crowded residences; yet people are attracted to them, and some houses have actually been built on these steep slopes.

Pressure of population will eventually put higher values upon the land, and future owners will undoubtedly, unless some method is adopted to prevent it, spend in the aggregate enormous sums of money on these hillsides. They will be obliged to spend on the average about half these amounts in retaining walls, steps, and other constructions which would be entirely unnecessary on gently sloping land. But aside from the difficulties of fitting such land for those who build residences upon them, there is to be considered

the enormous and disproportionate expense of maintaining streets on such necessarily steep grades.

"The money thus spent is to all practical intents and purposes, so far as the benefit to the community is concerned, absolutely thrown away. If it had not been spent in this way, the chances are that it would have been spent in some way that would have had more rental and taxable value and would therefore have been worth more to the community. Speaking in a general way, it would certainly *be a very profitable investment for the city, therefore, to take these lands out of the market for residential purposes* and use them for pleasure grounds for the benefit of the citizens at large and for the particular benefit of adjoining properties above and below.

"It should not be assumed that the improvement of these lands, if taken by the city, need necessarily involve any very great expense. For many years at any rate, the drive would answer quite well enough if surfaced with earth. Being intended for light pleasure vehicles only, a hard, heavy macadam surface it not essential.

"It seems reasonable to suppose that after a thorough examination and discussion of the matter, many of the large landowners would be willing to give these steep hillsides to the city for park purposes, or at any rate, to sell them at comparatively low rates.

Financial considerations.

"It may be objected that besides the burden of the interest and contributions to the sinking fund in connection with the debt which would be incurred for the acquisition of these lands, there would be the loss of taxes which would have been collected had the land remained in private ownership. This is only a short-sighted view of the matter. The purchase money for such lands is not thrown away, and, except in rare cases is not consumed in living expenses. Mainly it is re-invested, and presumably, therefore, continues to be taxed. Frequently it is a source of greater wealth to the community than when it was invested in these wild hillsides. Where money is raised by taxation for interest and sinking fund on a debt incurred for the wise purchase of land, it is a kind of forced saving by the people, not an expense, as is necessarily most of the money spent by a municipality. It is perfectly reasonable and scientific to permit

the purchase of land for park purposes on long-time bonds. The park bonds of several cities run for sixty years. It would also be reasonable that debt incurred for the purchase of land should be left out of consideration in determining the debt limit of municipalities.

"If the land needed for these parks could hereafter be secured at a reasonable price, and if the trees now growing upon it could be preserved from destruction, and if the land could be prevented from being occupied by expensive improvements, it would no doubt be well to postpone for another generation the acquirement of some of these areas; but judging from the sad experience of other cities in providing themselves with adequate systems of parks and parkways, it seems perfectly reasonable that the city should proceed cautiously but speedily to the acquisition of some such system as has been outlined above, but should bear in mind always that the attempt will prove a failure or will fall pitiably short of the ideal result without the cordial and liberal co-operation and assistance of the landowners whose properties are needed for the proposed improvements, or will be affected favorably by them. *If these property owners could visit the park systems of other cities, and study the increased valuations which the land bordering upon the various parks and parkways have in most instances acquired, no doubt most of them would be convinced of the advisability of giving to the city the land required for park purposes* in all cases where they would have enough land left to be benefitted; or of selling at extremely low prices, and re-investing the money in adjoining lands, in cases where the whole or the greater part of their holdings has to be taken for the parks or parkways. If the public sentiment can once be properly aroused in favor of a comprehensive system of parks, and if the landowners will co-operate cordially, it seems reasonable to assume that the greater part, if not the whole, of the system above suggested can be accomplished without undue strain to the public finances."—*By Olmsted Brothers.*

A SUMMARY OF THE CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED, AND THE PRINCIPLES FOLLOWED, IN THE SUGGESTED PARK AND BOULEVARD SYSTEM.

The especial considerations affecting the various features are mentioned in connection with the illustrations. Certain of these areas might without loss be replaced by different tracts in the same neighborhood, but many others have very special intrinsic value for our purpose.

The Legislature has designated as the "Metropolitan District of Providence Plantations" that populous neighborhood of which Providence is the centre, and including the three cities and eight towns.

In any comprehensive scheme for parks and public grounds, it is necessary:

1. To consider the needs of the whole district rather than those of any single city or town.

2. To perceive that this district is rapidly becoming one single great community.

3. To provide for the condemnation of land and the designing of a system that will best utilize the natural features, regardless of artificial boundary lines.

The population of Providence proper in January, 1906, was about 205,000.

The population of the Metropolitan District as above described, within a ten-mile circle, is about 362,000. It has doubled about every twenty-two or twenty-three years during the past century, and the ratio does not appear to diminish.

To provide for the needs of fifty years hence, we must therefore consider a population of 1,500,000 in this area.

The project divides itself into:

1. Parks and public reservations.

2. Connecting parkways, drives and boulevards.

In the case of the parks and reservations, it has been the object to include:

1. The places which are of the greatest present value for public resort where open spaces are most necessary, or which deserve preservation for their natural beauty, attractiveness, or historical interest.

2. The areas which are ill adapted or unduly expensive for development for commercial or residential purposes, or are otherwise destined to be plague spots or slums.

(Incidentally, the setting aside the picturesque spots for such improvement will increase the value of their respective neighborhoods and provide desirable residential places in their vicinity.)

In accordance with these general principles, so far as remains possible, we must set aside the following kinds of territory:

1. Steep and rocky hills and ground which is very broken and uneven, especially if wooded.
2. Ponds, lakes, and bay shores.
3. Valleys of little rivers.

These classes of property, though steadily being encroached upon, yet remain to a wonderful degree attractive and available for public uses.

So far as possible, hilltops should be taken in their entirety above the line of convenient building operations, and the boundaries of such reservations extend far enough below the crest to give proper view, both of and from the hill. Where this is not feasible, on account of value of property, a screen of trees would be called for.

Ponds and lakes are set aside almost without exception. Filling or dumping in any part destroys for very many years all property in the neighborhood of their shores.

"Boundary roads" are generally recommended, giving pleasant opportunity for promenades and desirable sites for buildings facing the park. The surrounding or bordering strips vary greatly in width, but the swampy edges or precipitous sides may be considered generally valueless for other than park purposes.

All small rivers running through populous districts should have their immediate shores reserved, except at places where the water power is deemed of too great value.

Most land which is periodically overflowed should be treated as a reservation because of the engineering works otherwise necessary to reclaim

it and control the floods. There is no question about the desirability of reserving such land for parks.

In addition to the above, a few tracts have been suggested which owing to the needs of their surrounding congested populations or for their historic and picturesque interest, although they are of some value for "productive" purposes, may be considered as of still greater value for public uses.

CONNECTING PARKWAYS.

The proposed connecting parkways, drives, and boulevards are considered with relation to their—

1. Directness in giving access from one reservation to the next;
2. Value as highways to connect various populous districts of the city which now lack "cross town" accommodation;
3. Avoidance of valuable buildings;
4. Greatest ease of grades;
5. Cheapness, the least valuable land being taken;
6. Development of property through which they pass into valuable building sites.

In some sections it will be considered best that they take a formal character; but generally, by being built on gentle though not too indirect curves, following to a great extent the conformation of land, they are cheaper to build and also more beautiful than streets laid out on ordinary lines.

The whole problem is to devise a plan whereby for the least expenditure there may be the greatest results in ways of beauty, health, utility, financial returns from the development of cities, and preservation of the most useful natural features, reserving them for the everlasting benefit of the many against the temporary shortsightedness and greed of the few.

"You have covered the subject so fully that it would be something of a puzzle to write anything on the same general topic that would not seem to be a repetition of what you say."—*Olmsted Bros., February,* 1906.

LITTLE RIVERS IN GROWING CITIES.

3. "The fresh water streams are subject to floods which cannot be confined within any ordinary conduits or covered channels, as disastrous experiments in this line have proved. How, then, shall these waterways be preserved in the midst of dense population? Shall they continue to be abused, polluted, and defaced by the population living on their banks or near them? Shall factory waste, sewage, and rubbish of all sorts be continually poured into them, and allowed to rot in the sun when the water is drawn off to turn the wheels of factories?"—*Chas. Eliot in Report of Mass. Park System.*

WHAT TO DO WITH LITTLE RIVERS.

4. THE POCASSET IN FLOOD TIME.—A COMMON PROBLEM.

"Had the waters of Stony brook and Muddy river been conducted away in sewers or canals, the expense would have been much greater than it has been. The cheapest way was the most beautiful way. The valleys of the streams were made to serve the enjoyment of the public, the water being conducted in open winding channels, simulating the course of a natural stream, while low marshy basins were provided for the overflow to which Stony brook was at times subject.

"So it happened that while this improvement fulfilled the demands for more efficient drainage in the best possible way, the landscape character of the territory has added enormously to the value of real estate throughout the entire neighborhood."—*Sylvester Baxter, in Metropolitan Park Report, Mass.*

5. BACK BAY FENS, BOSTON.—A PROBLEM SOLVED.
A beautiful park provided to solve the Stony Brook drainage problem.

WHAT TO DO WITH LITTLE RIVERS.

6. THE MOSHASSUCK AT SMITHFIELD AVENUE.—SOME POSSIBILITIES.

The river runs along between the street and the railroad track, for a considerable distance, and gives opportunities for treatment like that shown in the picture of the Boston river, which appears below.

7. RIVERWAY, BOSTON.—POSSIBILITIES REALIZED.

A valley parkway, maintaining a natural surface water channel. A railroad parallels the path to the right, but it is obscured by a mound of soil supporting a plantation.

LITTLE RIVERS IN GROWING CITIES.

(From Report of Massachusetts Metropolitan Park System.)

8. WHAT OFTEN HAPPENS TO RIVERS.

"The steadily increasing pollution has made it obnoxious to the adjacent communities. The contempt or dislike generated by such a condition is very different from the respect shown for the stream in the earlier days. One observes all sorts of ugly growths and developments upon the shores. Land has been cheapened in consequence. Ugly outbuildings, shanties, rubbish heaps, etc., disfigure the banks. Excrescences and scars mar the landscape."—*Sylvester Baxter in Metropolitan Park Report.*

"Public control or ownership of the banks of the stream will give added value to adjacent real estate, which will ensure its occupation by good houses having their fronts and not their back yards turned towards water-side roads. It will eventually provide for a whole series of public promenades and playgrounds for the use of the population which tends to crowd into the valleys. It will restore and preserve the attractiveness of the streams for that large class of citizens who take pleasure in boating. It will also provide, since the main streams flow towards the heart of the city, a series of sorely needed pleasant routes leading from the country, through the suburbs to the city, and even to the bay or ocean beyond."—*Chas. Eliot in Met. Park Report.*

The Metropolitan District of Providence Plantations is traversed by nine river valleys. The Boston example is worth considering.

AMERICAN PARK SYSTEMS.

Some Description of the Existing and Proposed Park Systems of Other American Cities.

The extent of the park movement throughout the United States and Canada may be thoughtfully considered with profit to ourselves. We therefore publish a brief survey of the work in most of the cities of over 75,000 people, including all of 150,000 or over.

"Facts not fancies, works not wishes, mark the successful national movement for the preservation of places of natural beauty for the use of the public, and the substitution of city squares and playgrounds for spots of wretched squalor and ugliness. This movement, which has secured marked headway in the last few years, has produced notable results. Parks, however fine in themselves, are inadequate for the needs of a city that has far outgrown them, and the work of adding well-chosen areas and of connecting the scattered parks into a system has just begun."

In this manner, the Allied Organizations of Philadelphia preface their recently published book upon "American Park Systems." The Allied Organizations include between forty and fifty of the most important financial, commercial, artistic, and educational societies of the Quaker City, and their object is to secure the establishment of a metropolitan park system patterned after the shining example of the Boston one. The especially interesting feature of this publication is found in the little colored maps of some twenty-five of the principal cities of the country, including all but two or three of those that have reached the 150,000 mark, which show how very general the great modern park movement has become. Several of these maps are republished in this volume by arrangement with the Philadelphia organization, for which they were prepared by Mr. Andrew Wright Crawford.

In each of these maps the ground now in public ownership is shown in green, and that which it is proposed to secure for additions in brown.

These leading organizations express the belief that a knowledge of what other cities are doing may be helpful in the realization of their own project. So great was the demand for the book by the people of other cities that the edition became speedily exhausted and extra editions are now being called for.

It is interesting to note that the map of the metropolitan district of Providence Plantations occupies a place in the book, and its "proposed" reservations, shown in the usual brown color, were copied from last year's report of the Metropolitan Park Com-

mission. By comparison with the others, it indicates a region strikingly varied and rich in natural features, unusually easy of acquirement, but unfortuately it has a larger proportion marked "proposed" and less "acquired," than most of the others.

None of the other maps show such striking possibilities so close to the thickly built areas where the people most need them. This is explained by the accompanying statement that "the very features of irregular contour which give these places special value for public reservations have retarded building operations and the laying out of streets."

Our many waterways and steep hillsides offer the choice between parks and slums, and it is evident that, if such places are not set aside for park purposes, the Providence district bids fair to become in time one of the ugliest of cities.

At first, city parks were more or less artifical in arrangement, and although affording some pleasant scenes of grass and flowers and fountains amid the walls of the city, were generally intended to be looked at rather than used. People were expected to stroll decorously through wonderful purposeless paths that led nowhere except into magic mazes of geometrical designs, bordered on every hand by admonitions to "keep off the grass."

Nature was fantastically caricatured by unhappy trees and hedges that had been trimmed or distorted into weird shapes, and obviously artificial lakes with their edges made into prim and precise angles, or else into parabolic or diabolic curves. Atrocious iron dogs glared quite harmlessly at crazy quilts of obtrusive floral representations of things that never existed on sea or land. Such places as these served a certain purpose of interesting or surprising the eye, as did the highly ornate and fragile wax bric-a-brac under the glass dome on the marble-topped parlor table.

In former days the real woods and the unpolluted rivers were not far away from most city centres, and unspoiled nature extended her full beneficence to those who needed it. Conditions having changed, the park need has now become vital like the need for public water and sewerage systems.

In the larger cities, metropolitan parks connected by driveways bring to the outlying suburban towns as well as to the city itself a connected system of parkways that benefits all the people.

These metropolitan park systems have been brought into being in several ways. Western cities generally contain within their own extensive areas most of the available park lands in the neighborhood, and this simplifies the plan of action. In the East, several of the larger cities are surrounded by suburbs which are under separate government. Newark, New Jersey, is an example of this, but here the superb reservation system has been made a county affair. The population of Essex county, which consists of a number of populous towns of limited area surrounding Newark, is about equal to that of the proposed metropolitan district of Rhode Island, *i. e.* about 360,000. Boston and Providence are the two other cities where the surrounding towns immediately contiguous are found to be nearly or quite as populous as the city itself. In these latter cases county limits are not such as to make them desirable for park districts.

A survey of the park work already accomplished, or under way, in the various cities of the United States and Canada indicates that any city of 75,000 people in which the movement has not made rapid headway is a rare and rather disgraceful exception to the rule. The cities in the East have been surrounded with so much of natural beauty, and so many places for recreation which have always been free and seemed destined to remain so, the opportunities have been lightly regarded, and now require a large expenditure to buy back what might once have been had almost for the taking. In the West, as a general rule, nature has not been so bountiful in her provision of woods and bay shores and rivers and lakes, and so the people more quickly rose to the necessity of providing by artificial means such substitutes as were possible for the things that were being neglected or destroyed in the East. "The West has been engaged in the process of making and the East in the work of destroying." (Brooklyn Eagle.)

Only a little over fifty years have elapsed since the first piece of ground in the United States was dedicated to the avowed purpose of a public park and Central Park became a reality to the millions instead of the roseate dream of a few.

Most of the earlier parks were the gifts of generous citizens, who with discernment beyond the little affairs of their own times foresaw the need that was to come, and by their gifts builded themselves monuments that will endure so long as our cities shall survive.

Other parks and parkways have been given with more selfish purpose, but wiselv enough, to assist in the process of suburban land development.

Cities and corporations have acquired reservoir rights that have become available for park lands without interfering with their original purposes, and public forests, secured for the purpose of preserving the water supply, like the Lynn woods, have become a part of the park area.

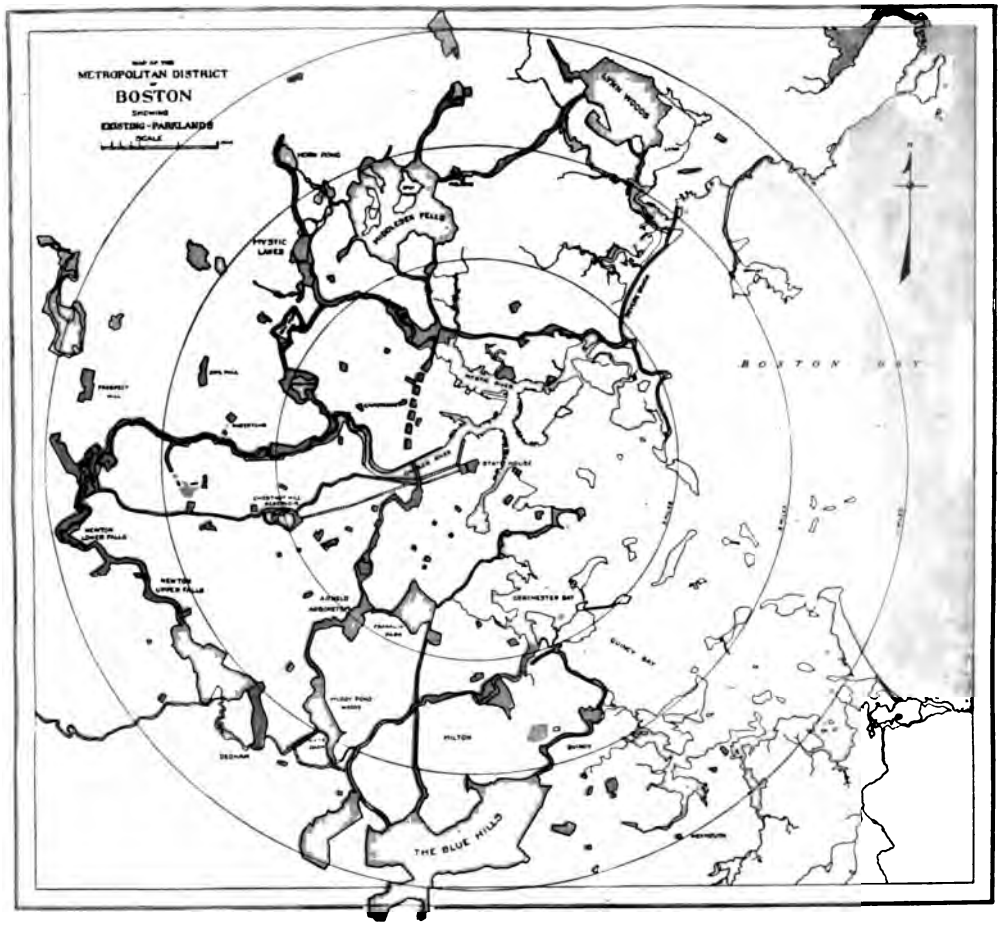
The outlook is encouraging, and there is good reason to believe that within a few years nearly all of our cities will have ceased to deserve the usual reproach of foreign visitors, that "American towns are the most dreary, dirty, and unlovely of all the cities of the world."

METROPOLITAN PARK SYSTEM OF "GREATER BOSTON."

To Massachusetts must be given the first place for its most comprehensive, complete, and admirable park system.

Similar conditions in Providence.

The conditions existing in Boston and vicinity, which have led to the necessity of creating metropolitan commissions for treating sewer, park, and water supply problems, are somewhat exceptional, but similar ones exist in Providence, Newark, Pittsburg, and Cin-



MAP OF BOSTON AND VICINITY.

Within eleven miles of the State House of Boston there are twenty-five miles of park-ways connecting parks covering 15,175 acres.

The following quotation is from Professor Zueblin's "American Municipal Progress:" "The best park system in the world is that of Boston and its suburbs, and the fact that within ten years so ambitious a project should have been not only carried out but amplified, is perhaps the most encouraging incident in American municipal progress in the last decade of the nineteenth century."

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cinnati. A brief description of these conditions will explain the perplexities of the situation and method of solving them.

The metropolitan park district has an irregular outline, bounded approximately by the circumference of a circle having a radius of twelve miles, with the State House on Beacon Hill in Boston as the centre. This district, comprising thirty-seven cities and towns, had a population, according to the census of 1895, of 1,005,215. Viewed as a whole, it appears as a great city grouped around the shores of the harbor and along the banks of the rivers, spreading out irregularly over hill and valley into the surrounding country, split up into small communities, divided upon political and not natural lines, and unable to provide adequately for its needs. To carry out any great public work affecting the entire district, which in earlier days was made up of large townships that have been divided and subdivided into smaller fragments, called for peculiar treatment under legislation framed especially for the purpose, reuniting these fragments into a large municipality, a "Greater Boston."

Almost any one of the park reservations can be cited as an illustration of the complexity of the subject. For instance, to secure in its entirety the Middlesex Fells, a most celebrated tract, situated in the cities and towns of Medford, Malden, Melrose, Stoneham, and Winchester, upon which streets and houses had already begun to encroach, the united efforts of two cities and three towns were necessary.

Two men, Sylvester Baxter and Charles Eliot, started the work which has resulted in the metropolitan park system. What they considered a dream which might take generations to accomplish was actually begun in two years and completed in seven.

The first public suggestion for a metropolitan park system appeared in January, 1891, and in December of that year the late Charles Eliot, secretary of the Trustees of Public Reservations, called a conference of the Park Commissioners of Boston and its suburbs. The result was the presentation and subsequent enactment of a bill by the legislature of 1892, providing for a Metropolitan Park Commission to consider the problem of parks for this entire district. Mr. Eliot was made landscape architect and Mr. Sylvester Baxter, secretary of the commission.

The report which the commission presented in 1893 was so ambitious that even the authors of the plan scarcely hoped for its acceptance. Their expectation was that an educational campaign might gradually bring people to an appreciation of this comprehensive scheme. The metropolitan park district was created, including eleven cities and twenty-five towns, a park commission was appointed in 1895 to execute the plans. and the first loan of $1,000,000 was authorized.

The work of the last seven years belongs almost in the realms of romance. The commission has acquired 10,000 acres of forest, sea shore, and river bank and has developed much of it. Land has also been bought for seventeen miles of parkways, of which twelve have been constructed and are in use.

Boston's system has not yet been entirely completed. Most of the unfinished additions are in outlying sections which are not immediately threatened by building operations. Of the two most notable proposals yet to be accomplished, one is the extension of the Charles River reservation along the southern bank of the river to the Charlesbank playground—an operation which in Providence should be duplicated by the completion of Blackstone Park and the extension of beautiful river roads along both sides of the Seekonk from Red bridge to Pawtucket.

The other great improvement is the proposed main connection between the northern and southern portions of the system, directly across Cambridge and Somerville to the Harvard bridge. It will require the destruction of buildings throughout.

By far the most expensive items of the system were in those features where a beginning a few years earlier would have avoided the destruction of buildings and costly improvements.

The state, however, although it issued the bonds and appointed the commission, was re-imbursed for its outlay by the particular cities and towns especially benefited. Each bore its part of the cost in proportion to its resources and benefits, a proportion determined by a special commission. This is the plan proposed for the "Metropolitan Park System of Providence Plantations."

The landscape features are of great diversity of character, beautiful shores on ocean, harbor, lakes, and rivers; country varied with hills and valleys, woodlands, rocky wildernesses, meadows, and streams.

The most important of the forest reservations is that of the Blue Hills, which includes the highest elevation of land in view of the Atlantic Ocean existing between Maine to Florida, covering an area, if two lakes on the margin of the reservation are included, of more than 5,000 acres. This makes the largest tract devoted to recreation belonging to any municipality in the United States. The reservation lies due south of Boston from nine to eleven miles distant from the State House, or practically the same distance as Warwick Neck from Providence.

In a semicircle from this point, running to the Lynn woods, near the sea on the north, is a continuous succession of river and forest reservations along the Neponset, Charles, and Mystic rivers, together with the local parks of Boston, Brookline, and Cambridge, and including the other great reservation of the metropolitan commission on the north, Middlesex Fells. This latter region contains over 1,800 acres of wild and rocky woodland, to which must be added 1,100 acres held by the metropolitan water board and the local water boards of Winchester and Medford, which for all practical purposes also constitute a park area. The Lynn Woods, over 1200 acres in area, forms an-

other one of the local parks which must be included in the provision for the metropolitan district because of its great beauty and extent, although, like Franklin Park in Boston, it is not included in the administration of the Metropolitan Park Commission.

The addition of five miles of seashore reservations on the east makes a nearly complete circle of parks and parkways about the metropolitan district. Of these beach reservations, the foremost is Revere Beach, where the great bathing facilities are located. A second important seashore reservation is Nantasket Beach, which was secured in consequence of the destructive storm of 1898. There are also 1,800 acres in the river reservations, to which must be added the holdings of the local boards of Cambridge, Waltham, Newton, and Medford.

This great metropolitan system, then, includes in the first place, forest reservations; in the second, the protection of five miles of seashore for the benefit of the public; in the third instance, the preservation of the banks of nearly all the streams in the metropolitan district; and fourth, a system of parkways and boulevards which will connect all of these different elements.

Boston has not only the finest park system in America, but is the leader in the movement for municipal playgrounds, by which is meant open spaces fitted up with outdoor gymnasia, running-tracks, and children's sand courts. They are not connected with schools and are open to any child or adult. In Boston, under the control of the Department of Parks, there are fifteen playgrounds, the location of which is such that every child is within a half-mile of one of them, while one of the larger athletic fields is within a mile of every child. It will thus be seen that Boston has not been blinded to the advantage of these small spaces by the more remarkable idea of its outer park system.

KANSAS CITY.

(*See map, next page.*)

Boston's example in its metropolitan park system is exerting the influence it deserves, but Kansas City's system, begun in the same year, is deserving of much attention. In 1901 it was nearly finished, and although since then some extensions have been made, it will be noticed that the map does not show any "proposed" additions, all the parks being completely connected into a system. Swope Park, the largest reservation, lies beyond the edge of the map. A parkway reaches it, the part outside of the city limits having been constructed at the expense of Jackson county.

The establishment of this splendid scheme of boulevards and parks has revolutionized Kansas City and brought about a much higher standard in all building operations. The new sections of the city, enclosed and bordered by these boulevards, present a contrast to the older portions of the town, as marked as if built a thousand years later. It is difficult to believe that the new Kansas City of the park and boulevard district is a part of the same city that straggles over the ragged sandhills and climbs the grimy slopes by ugly viaducts down by the Union station.

ESSEX AND HUDSON COUNTIES, NEW JERSEY, AND THE PALISADES.

Within a few minutes' railroad ride of Wall street is the most remarkable county park system in the United States. Nearly all the citizens of Newark and the Oranges, which are located in Essex county, are New York business men, and therefore the park system might be described as a portion of the park areas reserved for New Yorkers. It is of special interest to Rhode Island in several ways.

In 1894 there were in Essex County but twenty-six acres of park land and no parkways. A commission was then appointed, which by means of five loans, aggregating $5,000,000, has acquired 3561 acres of park lands and three miles of parkways. The latter are described as "but the beginnings of an extensive system of connecting parkways."

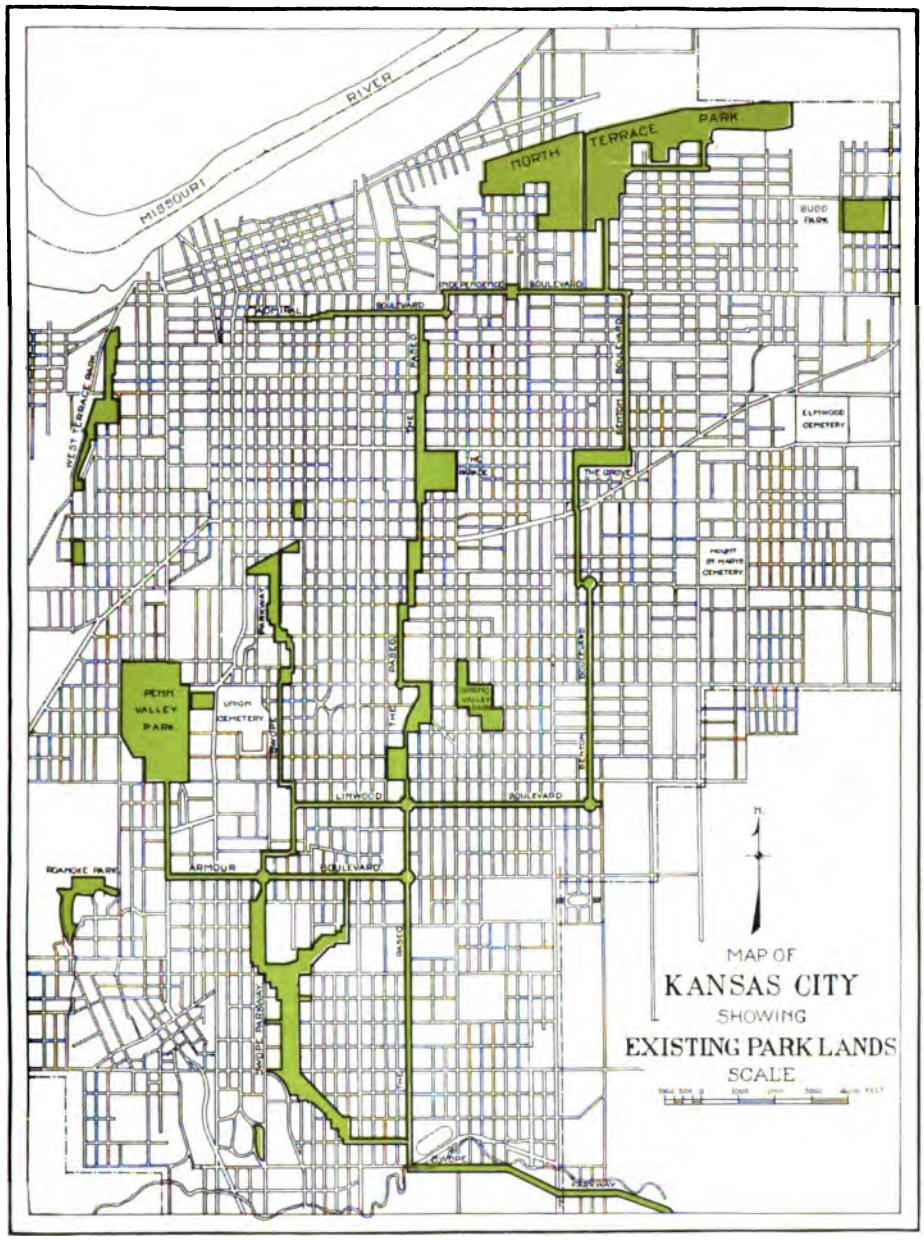
Branch Brook Park, which was established in rather a thickly built section of Newark, was naturally the most expensive of these parks, but the most splendid of them are the Orange Mountain and Eagle Rock reservations, from whose viewpoints all parts of Greater New York, as well as the populous regions of New Jersey, are clearly visible, and the eye looks upon the homes of more people than can be seen from any other single summits in the world.

In the neighboring Hudson county, in which Jersey City is located, a park commission has recently been appointed, but has not yet published its first report. The commissioners, however, state that their system will connect with the Palisades Interstate Park. This park is being secured by the joint action of the States of New Jersey and New York. It will preserve eleven miles of the shore frontage of the Hudson where the famous Palisades are located. About eight miles have already been purchased, and the destruction of these majestic cliffs that once seemed certain has been forever postponed.

It will thus be seen that citizens of New York, whether they live on Manhattan Island or in the Bronx, on Staten Island or in Brooklyn, or in Essex or Hudson counties, New Jersey, are securing park systems that are gradually becoming connected throughout. They have not been deterred by difficulties in their way, such as the enormous expense of land in New York, the necessity of securing the appointment of an official commission by Greater New York, the necessity of securing State action, as in the case of New Jersey, or the greater difficulty of securing interstate action, as in the case of the Palisades Park.

NEW YORK.

Greater New York is handling the park question upon a mammoth scale. The municipal reservations include Coney Island, which has not only grown much more respectable and attractive, but vastly more popular under municipal ownership. Across the peninsula of Harlem stretches the magnificent chain of Pelham Bay, Van Courtlandt and the Bronx parks, and in Manhattan itself are the extensions of Riverside and



"Kansas City now owns ten and one-half miles of completed boulevards, and land has been secured for about sixteen miles more. The total acreage is 2,050, secured within eleven years, and the total cost is expected to be about $6,500,000.

"Kansas City is constructing public playgrounds of which the Parade is the central one. It is equipped with all necessary apparatus for athletic sports and outdoor games." (See page 45.)

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Morningside drives for the development of the more magnificent sections, and such beneficent enterprises as Seward Park and Mulberry Bend Park, provided at a cost of nearly a million dollars an acre for the salvation of the poor.

Van Courtlandt Park is connected with Bronx Park by the Mosholu Parkway, 600 feet in width and over a mile in length. From Bronx Park a parkway 400 feet wide and two and a quarter miles long leads to the Pelham Bay Park, 1,756 acres in extent. It is proposed to continue the Grand Boulevard and Concourse southward to connect with Fifth avenue, and thus complete the connection with Central Park and the heart of the city at Fifty-ninth street and Fifth avenue.

At the foot of Manhattan Island a number of small parks have been acquired within a decade, at an expenditure of many millions of dollars. The land for three of them, covering ten acres, cost $5,237,363. Central Park, which covers 340 acres, cost $5,028,844. It was acquired from 1853 to 1863. In other words, by New York's delay in securing sites for small parks and playgrounds it has been obliged to pay more for these three small parks than it did for the whole of Central Park.

New Yorkers, spurred on by the city's want of breathing spaces, its great congestion of travel and its ugliness, recently secured the appointment of an official body called the New York City Improvement Commission. That commission has just rendered a preliminary report urging the acquisition of a large part of the water front along the Hudson river and the East river, the extension of Fifth avenue, as already mentioned, and the acquisition of park areas in Staten Island and in Brooklyn. It also makes a notable recommendation which has a local application:—

"Although the expenditures required by any proper plan must be large, they could in many instances be greatly reduced if the city had the power, exercised in many European cities, of condemning more than the area actually required, so that the city might reap the benefit to be derived from the enhanced value of neighboring property; and, in the judgment of the commission, steps should be taken to secure such changes in the constitution and legislative enactments as may be necessary for the purpose. This method of recouping part of the expense has been applied in various large cities of Great Britain and the continent where extensive alterations have been undertaken for securing architectural effects, remedying sanitary conditions, or improving the city generally, and it is questionable whether many of the improvements would have been otherwise accomplished. Objections to giving the city such power have sometimes been raised on the ground that it might be abused or injudiciously exercised. In these times, however, when so many extensive powers are being entrusted to those charged with the administration of the city's affairs, such objection can scarcely be considered conclusive if proper safeguards are imposed."

STATEN ISLAND.

Two years ago, the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce determined that, as that island is likely to be a residential section, no time should be lost in securing a complete park system. The acquisition of more than 3,500 acres of parks and 200 acres of playgrounds is recommended.

A special committee of the Municipal Art Society, formed to consider the street and park systems, with a view to their serviceable and artistic development, in its report says: "The question of a suitable park system is so intimately related to the proposed street system that the two must, of course, be considered together. . . . It would be hard to find any spot more inviting to the landscape architect than Staten Island. The wooded hills and pleasant valleys, natural water courses and ponds, are so beautiful as they stand, that little more is needed than to make proper selection of them, provide the roads and walks, and leave the rest to nature."

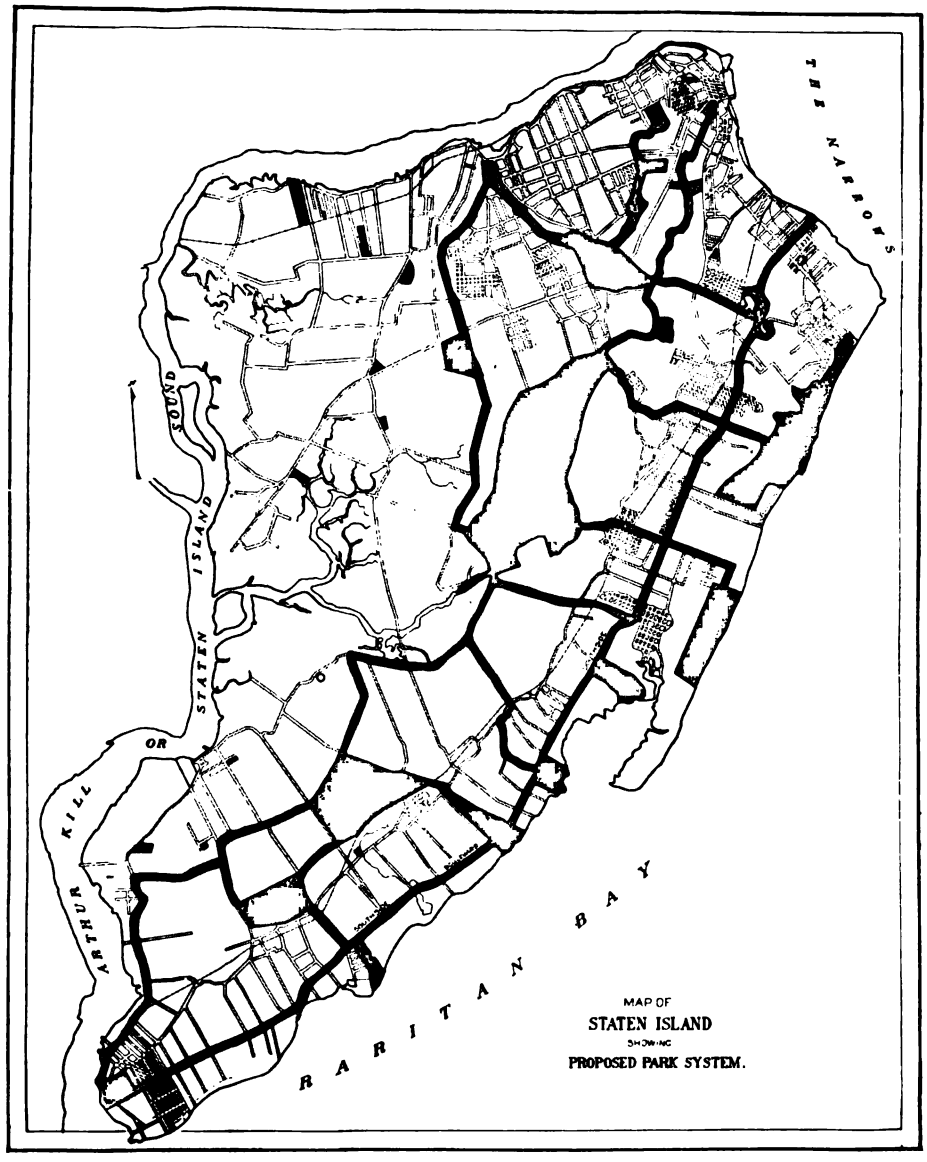
The report urges a wiser recognition of the natural conformation of Staten Island than was the case in Manhattan and points out that by such a policy Engineers will have less to do leveling than has been necessary with Manhattan Island. The committee declares that Staten Island is in many respects "far better suited as a site for a great city than Manhattan Island."

The experience of the 1807 plan for New York shows, that "a plan once officially adopted carries itself out automatically; changes are made with great difficulty."

PHILADELPHIA.

Active steps have been taken in Philadelphia for the adoption of a metropolitan park system. In the case of Philadelphia, as well as Chicago, the scheme proposed is very elaborate, and it is necessary to go a long distance from the present built-up area to find natural attractions of lakes and river valleys adapted for purposes of popular recreation and capable of being joined together to surround the city.

The "Allied Societies" have taken up the matter of municipal improvement in earnest, under the enthusiastic leadership of such well-known men as Andrew Wright Crawford and Frank Miles Day. Philadelphia has long been famous for its Fairmount Park, which was for many years the largest of American city parks, although it is now much overshadowed by a number of others. Its Zoological Garden and its Wissahickon drive are well known, the latter furnishing a useful object lesson from its comparison with our own Pawtuxet and Ten Mile rivers. Philadelphia, having been laid out on the most unfortunate "gridiron plan" of right angles, is now considering the construction of a diagonal street running from the city hall straight through the built-up blocks to Fairmount Park. It will cost from $4,000,000 to $8,000,000.



The Staten Island Chamber of Commerce proposes the setting aside of one-tenth of the whole area of the island for recreation purposes.

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ST. LOUIS.

St. Louis has undertaken to connect her scattered parks, covering 2,184 acres, into one grand system, and the plans call for a boulevard extending from the Mississippi river on the south, around one side of the city by way of Forest Park and the grounds occupied by the Exposition of 1904, to the Mississippi river at the north end of the city. The city last year expended $160,280 on the maintenance of its parks.

Spurred on by the need of new public buildings and by the example of Cleveland, the city has appointed a commission which has prepared a plan opening a parkway between Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets, extending from Olive street to Clarke avenue, thus forming a municipal court on which the recently constructed city hall will face. It is proposed to place the new "Four Courts," and the public library opposite the city hall. Sufficient space will be provided for the public and semi-public buildings which will be needed in St. Louis for many years.

The commission charged with studying the question of an "Outer Park System," proposes the improvement and extension of the historic Kingshighway so as to afford not only a pleasure drive but a convenient connection between Carondelet, Forest, and O'Fallon parks and to several important residential districts now badly separated. The Kingshighway will vary from 100 to 300 feet and have an approximate length of 25 miles. The estimated cost of these improvements is $2,000,000.

A striking suggestion is offered by preliminary plans for an attractive viaduct to carry Kingshighway across the railroads.

The purely utilitarian bridges, which have, with few exceptions, been constructed in this country, are beginning to give way to bridges in which beauty is considered as well as carrying capacity. To secure a beautiful bridge it will not do to first determine its construction from a purely engineering point of view and then to spend such and such a sum trying to "tack beauty onto it." As the beauty of the city is dependent upon the city plan, so the beauty of a bridge is dependent upon its basic plan, as the builders of the new Manhattan Bridge in New York have been finding out.

MILWAUKEE.

The park system of Milwaukee is less interesting than many of the others, because it follows the lines, always unfortunate, of the gridiron system of streets. One interesting feature, however, that is a significant result of the park movement, is the proposal to connect existing parks by a boulevard along the lake front with the large park at the north, thus bringing the latter into intimate connection with the heart of the city.

This appreciation of water fronts is becoming more notable with every new report on existing and proposed park systems. In the case of the larger rivers the adoption of the treatment by European cities of their water fronts is being more and more strongly recommended.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

Every American cares first about the improvement of his own city, but beyond that there is one thing on which all are agreed. Washington, the nation's capital, must be made the most beautiful city in the land.

The Plan of the City.

Several years ago the Senate appointed a commission of experts of the greatest ability to prepare a plan for the improvement of the District of Columbia.

The commission after careful study found that its "unique duty" was to follow the altogether admirable street plan prepared by L'Enfant with the co-operation of Washington and Jefferson. Such a plan, in which diagonal avenues traverse a rectangular network of streets, and have at their intersections small public parks in the form of squares, circles, or triangles, should, indeed, generally be adopted for the more level sections of cities, giving way to curved streets where the rolling character of the ground makes them reasonable and more economical. Washington has, chiefly at the street intersections, 275 green spots less than an acre in extent.

The City's Gateway.

The important recommendation of the commission called for the removal of the Pennsylvania railroad and its station from the mall which it so greatly disfigures, and the erecting, at some more suitable point, of a new Union station worthy of the nation's capital. In this project the railroads willingly co-operated, and the splendid new station is now approaching completion.

The Mall.

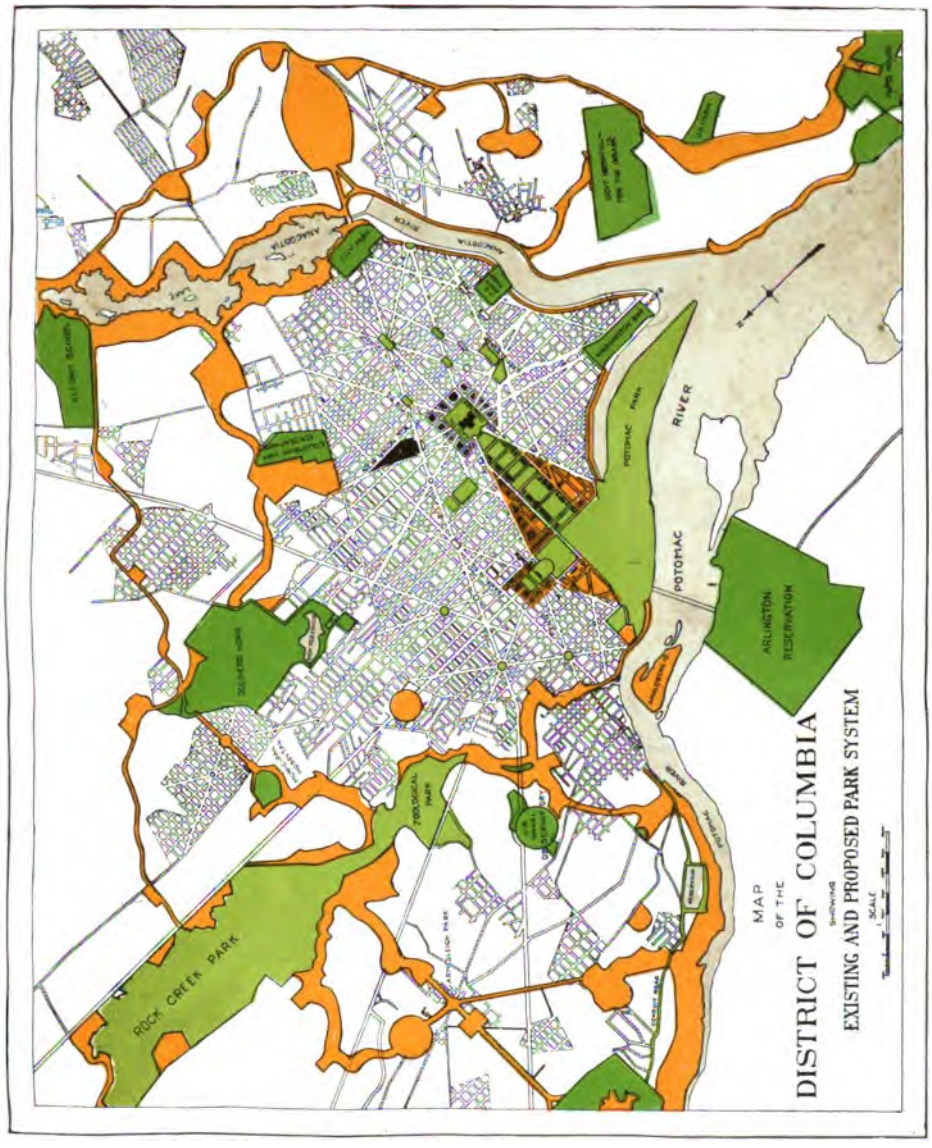
Next, the commission recommended that a stately mall eight hundred and ninety feet wide be laid out on a line from the dome of the capitol to the Washington monument, and extended in a straight line to the Potomac river, the mall to include a broad lawn of grass flanked on either side by four rows of American elms.

The Placing of the Public Buildings.

The commission also devised an intelligent and reasonable scheme for the placing of future public buildings; those related to legislative affairs to be about the capitol; those for administrative purposes about Lafayette square near the White House; those for general purposes, such as museums, flanking the mall; and those for the public uses of the District of Columbia in the triangle between Pennsylvania avenue and the mall.

By a recent executive order the President has appointed, as an advisory board to consider the choice of sites for public buildings within the District of Columbia,

In this map, dark green shows grounds other than parks, that are open to the public.



WASHINGTON.—*The Outer Park System.*

A most important part of the report of the commission deals with the much-needed systematizing of Washington's parks. Their recommendations involve the reclamation of the malarial Anacostia flats, a park by the riverside reaching to the Great Falls of the Potomac, and a chain of driveways connecting the hilltop forts about the city.

A very interesting proposal of the commission is that for an elevated driveway along certain parts of the river front as suggested by the example of foreign cities.

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and designs for the exterior of such buildings, all the members of the former Senate Commission, and six public and three semi-public buildings having been authorized in accordance with their plans.

BUFFALO.

The Park System and the City Plan.

The park system of Buffalo is one of the most interesting in America. Less extensive than many of the others, it yet offers a remarkable variety. It reaches not merely around the city, but into its heart at Niagara square.

Buffalo has a very admirable street system. L'Enfant, the genius who planned Washington, also planned Buffalo. Haussmann, who came sixty years later to Paris, adopted the Washington plan in principle, and Paris was made beautiful in forty years.

The central portion of the business area of Buffalo, to and from which the traffic flows, is marked by Niagara square, and from that square the streets branch out like ribs of a fan. Delaware avenue is the finest of them and is one of the most beautiful city streets in America.

Buffalo's park system is not yet complete, as a short connecting link is still needed to connect the northern and southern sections. Delaware Park is the largest of the public grounds and is widely known on account of having been the site of the Pan American Exposition. "The Front" has a noble outlook over the Niagara River.

In Buffalo, as in Washington, many small parks, located at the intersections of various streets, end the vistas of those streets very attractively. The widest parkway of Buffalo is the Scajaquada, 300 feet in width and three-fifths of a mile in length. Buffalo has also several parkways 200 feet in width, and is planning to extend them. Its total park area is 1,049 acres, which it spends about $125,000 a year to maintain.

The Group Plan.

Buffalo has many railroads, but no adequate station. It is now proposed to give the city a worthy entranceway, by clearing away the buildings from a great triangular area near Niagara square. On one side will be the new union station, beyond which, upon the lake front, docks are proposed for passenger steamers. The other sides of the triangle are flanked by broad avenues upon which, facing the proposed park, public buildings may be erected, the city hall standing already in such a position. Thus Buffalo, like Cleveland, proposes to make its civic centre serve as the gateway to the city.

Exchange place, the great gateway of Providence, possesses unimproved possibilities quite as admirable as any found in Cleveland or Buffalo.

BALTIMORE.

The Municipal Art Society of Baltimore has recently issued a very valuable report, prepared by Olmsted Brothers, upon a metropolitan park system for Greater Baltimore. Baltimore now has 1,477 acres of park land within its limits and a greater area outside.

The city will be completely surrounded by parkways connecting Druid Hill Park and the other large parks which are located at the four corners of the city and will improve opportunities offered by the creek called Jones Falls—made famous as the natural barrier which limited the ravages of the fire—by the Back Bay river and Herring Run; by the Patapsco river, and the Gwynn's Falls and Gunpowder Falls creeks, which suggest like opportunities furnished by the numerous river valleys that appear upon the map of our own park district.

The proposed addition to the park system would give twenty-four small new parks covering altogether 204 acres; besides additions to existing parks amounting to about 320 acres; and about fifty-six miles of valley parks and parkways, with cross connections varying in width from 200 feet to a quarter of a mile. In addition, great public reservations are proposed, one of which would cover about 2,560 acres of water and 2,400 acres of land; another, about 800 acres of each; a third, 1,100 acres of land and 180 acres of water. Outlying reservations that are even greater in extent are also recommended in the report, for the purpose of providing storage basins for the public water supply as well as park lands for the growing population. These outlying reservations cover sixty-one and three-quarters square miles.

The estimated cost of securing the land for this system is $3,000,000.

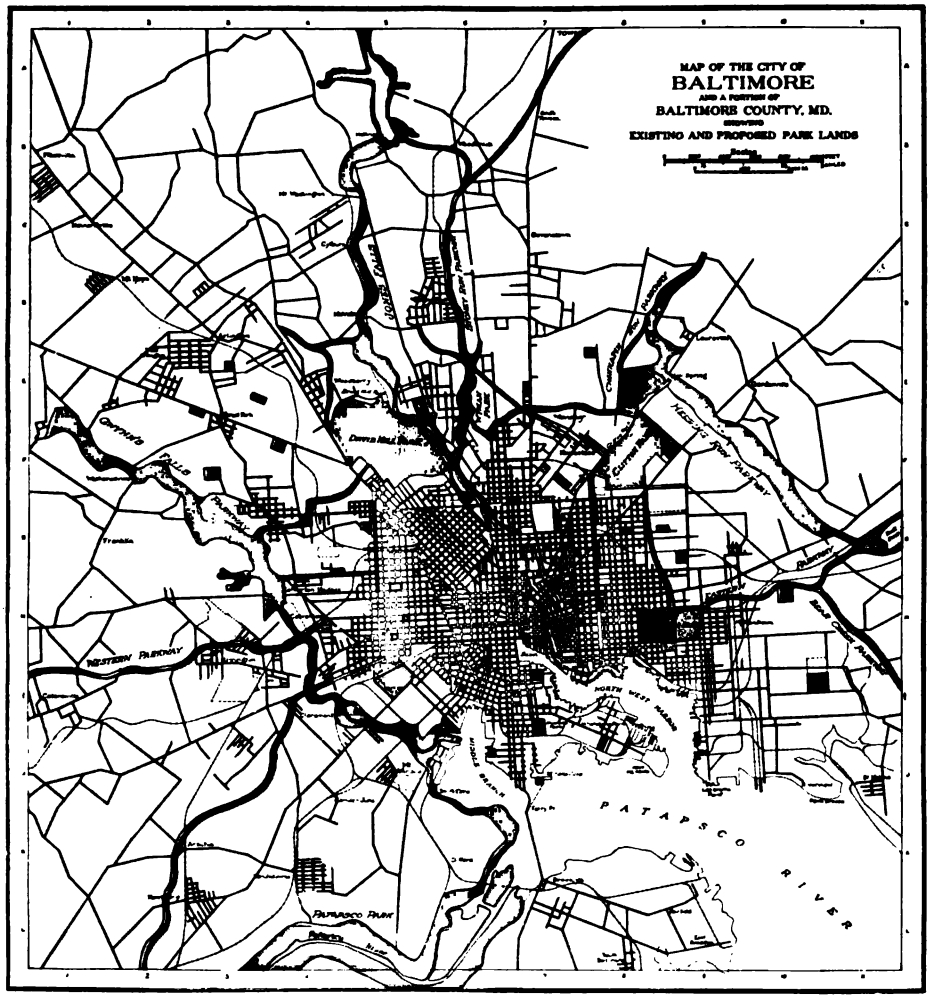
PITTSBURG.

Pittsburg has several large though scattered parks, of which Schenley Park, containing the splendid Carnegie museum, is the most noteworthy. It is, however, among the larger cities, the only one that does not report any movement looking to a connected park system, though probably the proposed annexation of Alleghany and the neighboring towns will bring about a change.

The extraordinarily ragged and precipitous contour of the older part of the city, over which the streets straggle in a hopeless and disjointed sort of a way, gives rise to every sort of difficulty of municipal construction, and many of these problems are so great that no attempt has been made toward their solution.

The new Pittsburg, where the parks and finer residences are located, is rapidly growing up in a region so far removed from the original site as to appear like a wholly separate city. There are 24 miles of boulevards and 1,009 acres of parks, of which 320 acres were donated to the city, and the expense last year was $113,337.

Alleghany, which is just about to become a part of "Greater Pittsburg," has 360 acres of parks and an appropriation for maintenance of (1903) $40,110.



Baltimore county has a population a little more than one and a half times as great as the "Metropolitan Park District of Providence Plantations," and devotes about six times as much in annual appropriations to the maintenance of its parks. The franchise of the street railroads assists materially in this beneficient purpose.

One million dollars has recently (1905) been voted to begin work on the new parts of the park system.

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LOUISVILLE.

Louisville is constructing a system of parks of about 1,350 acres which encircles the city on three sides, the river being on the fourth. An approach to its main country park and a return drive have already been secured.

A great deal has been done in Louisville in the direction of children's playgrounds and the reports are valuable. The cost of maintenance last year was $70,896.

Cities that secure outer parks will be well supplied with breathing spaces in future years. Their death rate in the future will be much diminished in consequence.

INDIANAPOLIS.

Indianapolis, the city next smaller than Providence in 1900, is the most symmetrically planned of the large cities of America, and from its great central monument one may look far beyond the circle of its pleasant tree-lined streets to the level edge of the horizon. A plan is being worked out for a "Court of Honor," around which all of its fine public buildings shall be grouped. Its per capita wealth is less than 70 per cent. that of Providence, but it expended, year before last, more than three times as much to maintain its parks. It had two and a half times as many acres, and several of its parks are close to the business district.

ROCHESTER.

Rochester is bestowing very artistic treatment upon the development of her parks, the arrangement of the drives and boulevards and the use made of the native shrubbery. South of the city is the quiet and beautiful Genessee Valley Park, where the river is placid and winding, and not far away is Reservoir Park, upon a high hill. On the North Side, Seneca Park extends almost all the way from the falls of the Genessee, to Lake Ontario, eight miles away. There are bordering boulevards high up on either bank, while far down in a splendid valley the river flows majestically. The scene is on a smaller scale, but it bears much resemblance to the gorge of the Niagara, or the deep valley of the Mississippi between Minneapolis and St. Paul.

Rochester contests with Providence the honor of being the best lighted city in the United States.

NEW ORLEANS.

New Orleans, although saddled with an enormous debt, is actively endeavoring to raise the means to undertake large comprehensive improvements in the way of drives, parkways, and playgrounds through the unoccupied region north of the city. Several very beautiful parks, notably Audubon Park, have been provided by private means. There are many miles of wide boulevards extending across the city.

CLEVELAND.

The Park System.

Under date of February 2, 1905, the Chief Engineer of Parks wrote:

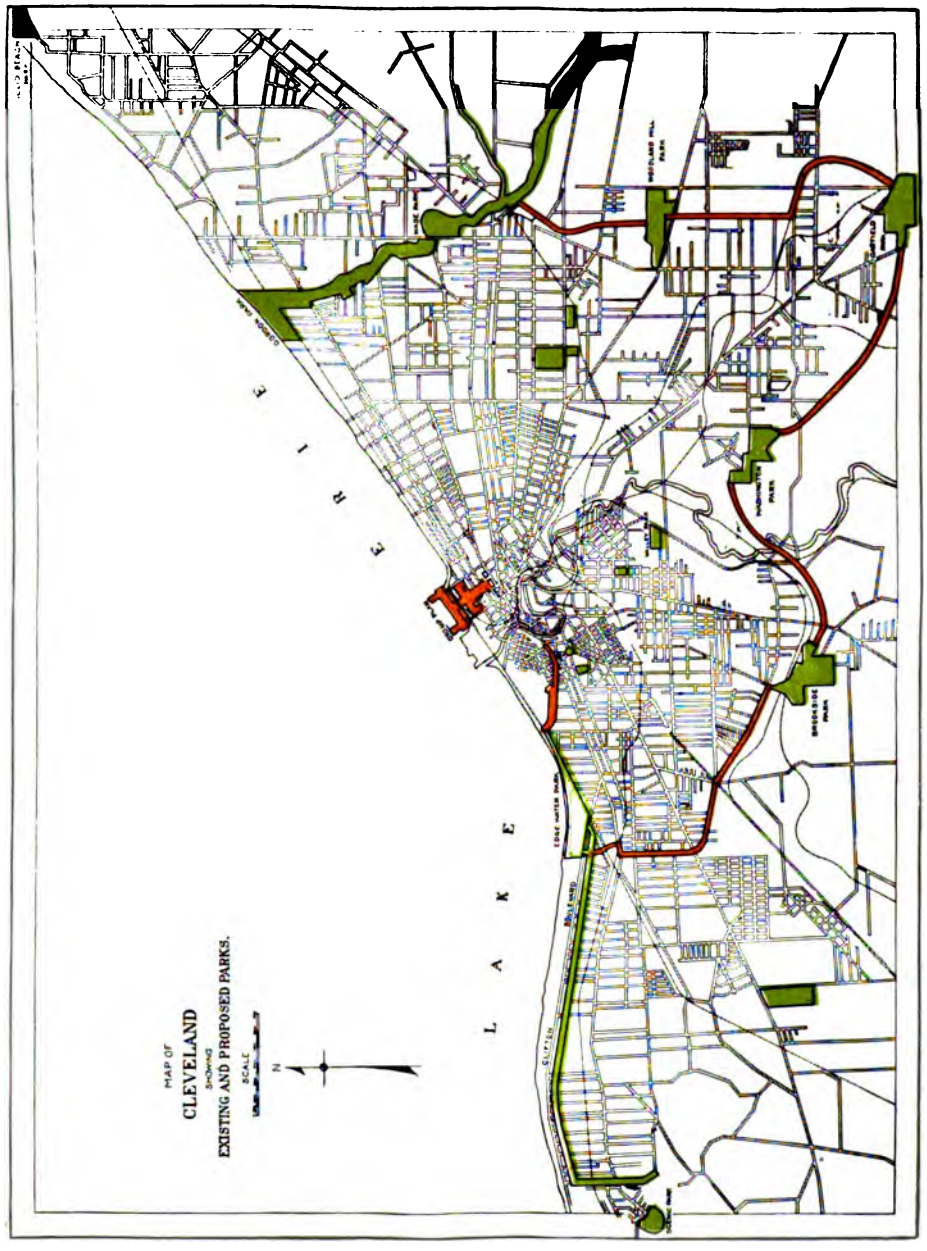
"We have six miles of parkway constructed. These parkways vary in width from 300 to 1,200 feet according to the lay of the land. We intend to start this summer securing land for a parkway between Edgewater and Brookside parks, and also between Ambler and Woodland Hills parks. . . . To complete the girdle of parkways around the city will require the construction of sixteen miles of additional parkways. The city now has 1,524 acres of park land, of which 676 acres have been donated. A finer monument, a nobler philanthropy, than such a benefaction can not be devised."

Many miles of beautiful drives in the eastern section of Cleveland, beyond Wade and Gordon parks, might well be classed as boulevards. Gordon Park possesses a fine bathing beach with an attractive casino and a beautiful background of thickly wooded bluffs. Edgewater Park occupies a commanding situation at the west end. It is now proposed to connect these parks along the lake front with the new "civic centre."

The Group Plan.

It so happened that the United States government was about to build a post office, Cuyahoga county a court house, the city a library and a city hall, and the railroads a new passenger station, and the Cleveland Chapter of Architects proposed that these buildings should be grouped so as to increase their convenience, to produce a worthy civic centre, and to enhance the beauty of each other. The plan that has been adopted consists of a central mall cut from a part of the city, which, though near its centre, was undesirably occupied. At the head of this mall the United States post office is now in course of construction, balancing the proposed public library, while at either side of the foot of the mall, and facing the lake, the city hall and the county building will be built. The union station, ample for the needs of a rapidly growing city of 400,000 inhabitants, terminates the composition to the northward, while bordering the lake is a landing place for passenger steamers.

It must be borne in mind that without the group plan isolated and more costly building sites would certainly have been selected than have now been secured. Therefore, the net cost of the plan is represented by the estimates for the land and improvement of the mall, $3,374,780, which the citizens of Cleveland may well regard as small in comparison with its permanent advantage. There will be a great increase in the value of surrounding property, and beyond all monetary considerations, will be large benefits from a wonderful and beautiful architectural effect corresponding favorably with those in European capitals, and commanding the admiration of the world.



Cleveland is making a great central improvement and a great outer one at the same time. Work has been started on a municipal group scheme which for dignity and beauty will be almost unsurpassed. Its location is indicated in buff in the centre of the lake front upon the map. Since this map was drafted proposed connections between the "group plan" and Gordon Park and Edgewater Park have been designed.

The outer park system is shown in part upon the map. Though not great in acreage, it is wisely planned so as to produce an impression far beyond its actual area. The park system as at present completed extends about one quarter of the way around the city.

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THE "TWIN CITIES."

St. Paul and Minneapolis, no longer known as bitter rivals, but rejoicing in their modern title of "the Twin Cities," had in 1900 a combined population but little greater than that of our own metropolitan district, and with a taxable valuation nearly fifty per cent. less, have over four times the park area and gladly tax themselves more than three times as much to maintain it. Together they are creating a splendid park system which includes a magnificent array of lakes and rivers. The famous Lake Minnetonka, the great gorge of the Mississippi river, Fort Snelling, and the Falls of Minnehaha are parts of this system, which contains 2,963 acres, and the connecting boulevards, varying from 66 to 800 feet in width, are at present 34 miles in extent.

Minneapolis alone has three times the park area of Providence, and expends about twice as much ($79,618 in 1904) to maintain it.

St. Paul has twice as much area (1,215 acres), and last year expended upon its maintenance $68,849.

The proposed outer park system was an important feature of the Twin City exhibit (the exhibit of Minneapolis and St. Paul) at the St. Louis Exposition, where it secured first prize in the municipal competition.

Minneapolis was one of the first cities in America to establish a system of boulevards surrounding the city and connecting its various parks in a continuous chain, and is profiting much by its foresight in acquiring the necessary land before it reached present prices. The parkways have been enormously valuable in developing Minneapolis as a fine residence city and attracting wealth and culture.

Minnesota has recently erected, at St. Paul, a beautiful State Capitol, which, however, is lost in the maze of streets and is seen with difficulty except from distant hills. The architect, Mr. Cass Gilbert, has proposed a rearrangement of the streets, which meets with much approval by the citizens and has the following objects in view:

1. The enlargement and proper treatment of the open space about the building.
2. The formation of a "Court of Honor" leading towards the business district.
3. A direct and dignified approach from Summit avenue and the new cathedral.
4. The development of a broad avenue at right angles to the facade of the capitol, and extending southward to "Seven Corners."

Not content with one parkway as an approach to the new State Capitol, the Park Commission of St. Paul has approved a plan for three.

There are possibilities for improving the approaches to the Rhode Island State Capitol in Providence in a splendid manner and at much less expense. (See pages 76 and 77, and diagram of plan proposed by the Rhode Island Chapter of Architects.)

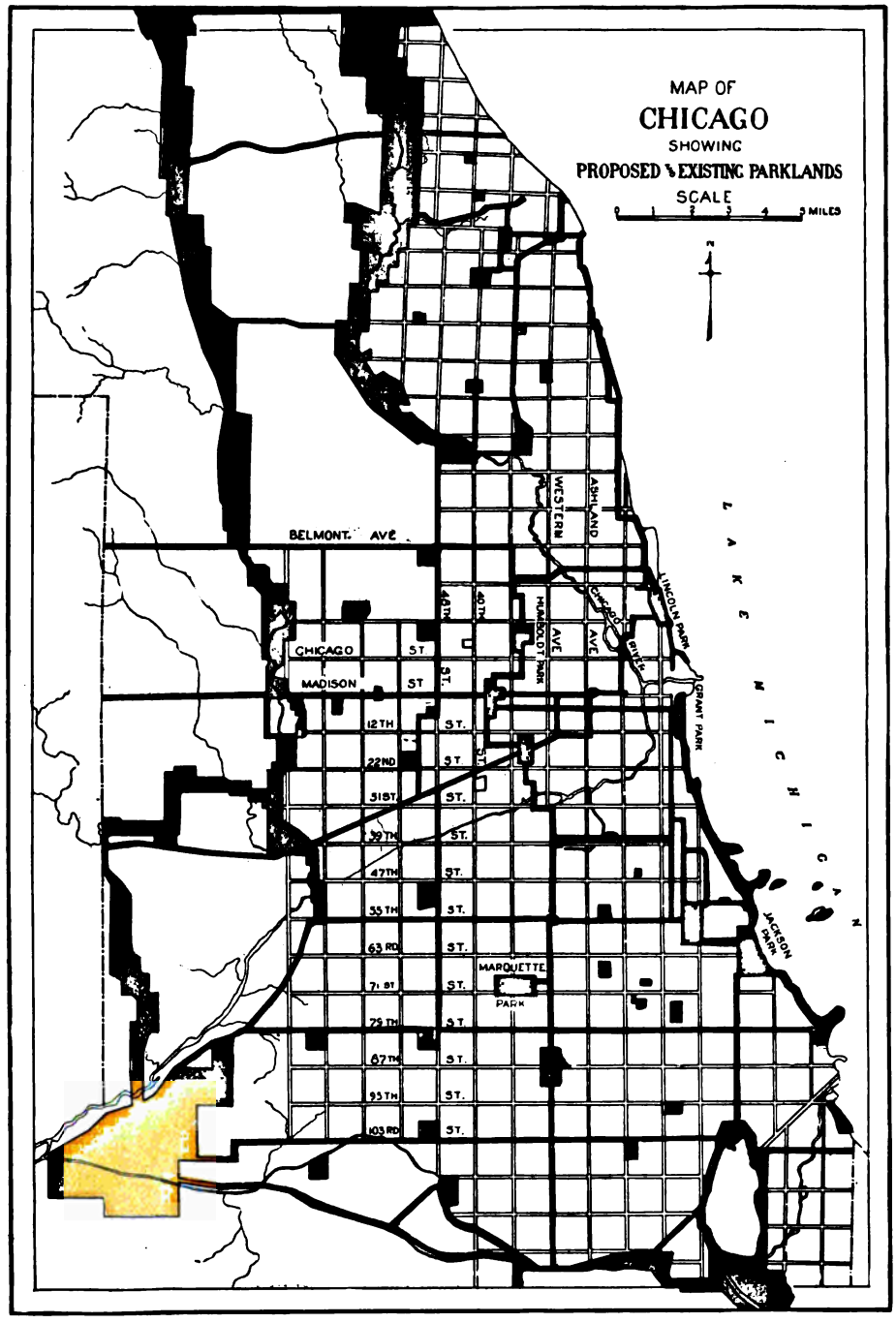
CHICAGO.

In 1869 Chicago began building a system of parks connected by boulevards. In 1880 it had two thousand acres. Twenty-three years later, these parks having become inadequate to the population, the Commissioners were authorized to spend $6,500,000 for additional parks varying from five acres to three hundred acres in extent, mostly in or near centres of dense population. The average cost of construction of these parks is $90,000, and of maintenance, $20,000 per annum, because they contain outdoor gymnasia, swimming-pools, etc. Grant Park, the old lake front of the heart of the city, has been increased in area five fold; Lincoln Park greatly extended; Jackson Park, where the Exposition was held, has been rehabilitated. Chicago now has eighty-four parks aggregating 3,169 acres, connected by forty-nine miles of boulevard, of which the finest by far is the magnificent Lake Shore Boulevard, now almost continuously constructed to Evanston.

Not content with these improvements, a special commission has recently presented plans for a gigantic outer park system. Since the city lacks natural picturesqueness of location, the proposed boulevards strike out boldly into the country to find distant attractions. The most astounding proposition is the one to make over the coast line of Lake Michigan for ten or a dozen miles and to get rid of its monotonous regularity by building several long peninsulas and a chain of large islands two miles or so out from the present beach of Jackson Park. "Chicago," says the official report, "should acquire a bay or harbor enclosed by islands. It should and can be made more like Portland, Boston, and New York."

To the north, where the shore of Lake Michigan rises into bluffs with wooded ravines between them, is shown a park of 7,000 acres; in the west another of 8,800 acres. The valley of the Desplaines river, parallel with the lake shore and about eleven miles west, will afford a park drive through twenty-five miles of woods and meadows. In the south-west the forests of the Palos region will give a park larger even than Blue Hills near Boston, and toward the south a preserve about Lake Calumet will afford a recreation space for the toilers of South Chicago and Pullman. In all eighty-four new parks are proposed, aggregating 37,000 acres, extending twenty-five miles into the country, and to be acquired at a probable cost of $25,000,000. (See "Moral Influence of Parks.")

Chicago believes that its present system must be greatly augmented if conditions are to be at all tolerable for the 8,000,000 people who are expected to live within the metropolitan area fifty years hence.



Chicago's recently appointed Park Commission urges a system covering 40,000 acres, and the preservation of nearly the entire water front of the city. Only a few of the streets are shown, as the map is on a scale of four miles to the inch and covers an area about twenty-seven by forty miles! The existing city is indicated in a general way by the surrounding boulevards shown in green. Note the proposed peninsulas, and the islands to be created two miles out from the present shore!

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SAN FRANCISCO.

San Francisco, before its appalling catastrophe, was already famous for its Golden Gate Park and the Presidio, which have now demonstrated their value in an unanticipated manner as a shelter for tens of thousands of homeless people. Through the activity of the chief commercial organization, the Merchants Association, the people recently voted four million dollars for the extension of the system of parks and parkways, and Mr. D. H. Burnham was commissioned in 1904 to prepare a revised street and park plan. This plan, fortunately rendered much more practicable by the recent destruction of 2,400 acres of buildings, provides for a "Civic Centre" just beyond the City Hall, where Market Street is intersected by Van Ness Avenue and by the "Pan Handle," which comes from Golden Gate Park. From this centre nine great streets will radiate, and beyond it three lines of encircling boulevards are proposed, the outer one, twenty-five miles in length, running along the bay and ocean front and over the Twin Peaks at the back of the city.

The San Francisco reports indicate an appreciation of the financial value of park improvements in attracting tourists.

"All of the prominent landmarks of the city," they say, "especially the tops of the highest hills, should be preserved and improved.

"Boulevards running through trees, flowers, and green lawns, connecting our two grand parks and all the sections of the city, would afford such a variety of attractions for visitors and pleasure seekers as would draw from the ends of this continent and the world over. The immediate results, financial and other, lead us to recommend that the necessary land be purchased or condemned."

The yearly park appropriation (1903) was $346,751, and there were 1,235 acres of parks for a population slightly in excess of our metropolitan district.

With our own famous possession of Narragansett Bay, and with 4,000,000 people within a day's excursion by trolley, suburban train or automobile, the business advantage of improving natural possibilities to attract shoppers and visitors, who could combine business and pleasure, ought to be fully apparent.

CINCINNATI.

In Cincinnati a fine boulevard with a great stone arch across a ravine is proposed, to connect Burnet Woods with Eden Park. The engineering difficulties are great and the cost necessarily large.

Eden Park commands a splendid prospect from a lofty height over the lower part of the city and the great valley of the Ohio river. It contains the city reservoir and a celebrated art museum. Cincinnati is most deficient in park area of all the great cities.

DETROIT.

Detroit, which is larger than Providence, but not as populous as the metropolitan district, possesses 28 parks, of which the combined area is 1,254 acres. A boulevard twenty-eight miles in length extends entirely around the city connecting the various parks, of which the famous Belle Isle of 707 acres in the Detroit river is the most notable.

The great streets of Detroit radiate in a fan-like way from the Grand Circus Park and Cadillac square. The stately Woodward avenue is 125 feet wide in the business district, and Jefferson avenue, Fort avenue, and others are spacious and immaculate thoroughfares.

The principal buildings of Detroit are placed around Cadillac square, which suggests Exchange place in many ways, but it has a mall with trees and fountains instead of a dismal expanse of bare granite in its centre.

With the exception of Providence, this completes the list of cities in the United States which in 1900 exceeded 150,000 population, but the movement for park systems is international.

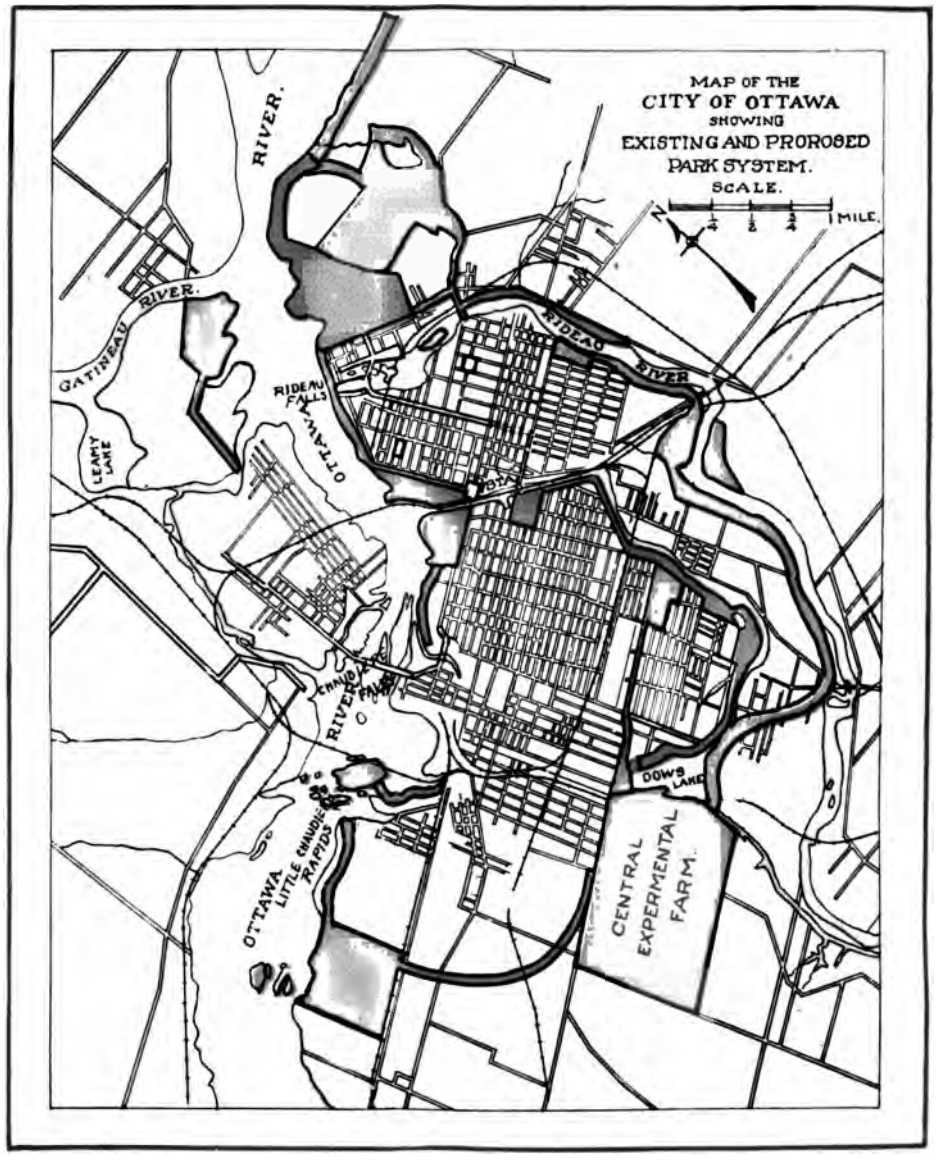
In Canada the two cities which exceed this size are Toronto and Montreal, both of which have splendid parks. Mount Royal in the latter city is famed afar. Ottawa has magnificent plans partially carried out, including fine waterfalls and river reservations. Halifax has its terrace and esplanade, Victoria the fine grounds of its Parliament buildings, and Quebec its imposing citadel and noble promenades.

OTTAWA, CANADA.

The government of Canada recently appointed a commission to prepare a plan for the improvement of its capital city.

Mr. Frederick G. Todd, the landscape architect of the Commission, said in his report:

"It does not require an unreasonable amount of faith to believe that the Ottawa of to-day is but the infant Ottawa of fifty years hence. You may ask, is it reasonable to look so far ahead as one hundred years or more, and to make plans for generations in the distant future? We have only to study the history of the older cities, and note at what enormous cost they have overcome the lack of provision for their growth, to realize that the future prosperity and beauty of the city depend in a great measure upon the ability to look ahead and the power to grasp the needs and requirements of the great population it is destined to have."



Few inland cities compare with Ottawa in the extent and picturesque character of the rivers and streams within her boundaries. It was obvious that public ownership of their shores should be greatly extended, and steps are being taken to that end.

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WORCESTER.

Worcester, with a little more than half the population of Providence, now possesses nearly twice as much park area, and its sixteen parks contain 1072 acres. Elm Park holds a proud distinction, for twenty-seven of its acres, bought in 1854, represent "the first purchase of land for a public park in the United States."

Green Hill Park of 500 acres, which had been a great private estate for nearly two centuries, was acquired in December, 1905. It contains the highest hill in Worcester and a beautiful little lake. The last occupant of the fine old mansion was Andrew H. Green, to whom the establishment of Central Park in New York and the government park at Niagara were so largely due. Lake Park borders upon Lake Quinsigamond and is a popular resort, and there are very numerous play-grounds and small parks arranged with abundant facilities for outdoor games and sports.

Worcester has benefitted much by the public spirit of her wealthy citizens who have bequeathed great sums of money and many splendid gifts of land.

OMAHA.

Omaha gives illustration that William Penn's plan of straight streets and rectangular blocks, unrelieved by diagonal or curving streets, has been as bad for other cities as for Philadelphia, but the park system which has been acquired within the last few years tends to break up the appearance of monotonous regularity. It is proposed to secure other parks in outlying sections. Fifteen miles of parkways have been arranged for, varying from 150 to 200 feet in width, and another parkway ten miles in length is officially proposed.

TOLEDO.

Toledo is establishing a splendid system which utilizes the banks of the broad Maumee river, and extends continuously around the city.

The approximate length of its parkways will be twelve miles, their width varying from 150 to 250 feet. Five miles of these parkways are already in use, and the city is already possessed of about twice as much park area as Providence. Boating is very extensively engaged in, and to add to its safety and attractiveness, at the lower end of the city where the river widens into Lake Erie, several artificial islands have been built to provide a protected harbor.

HARTFORD.

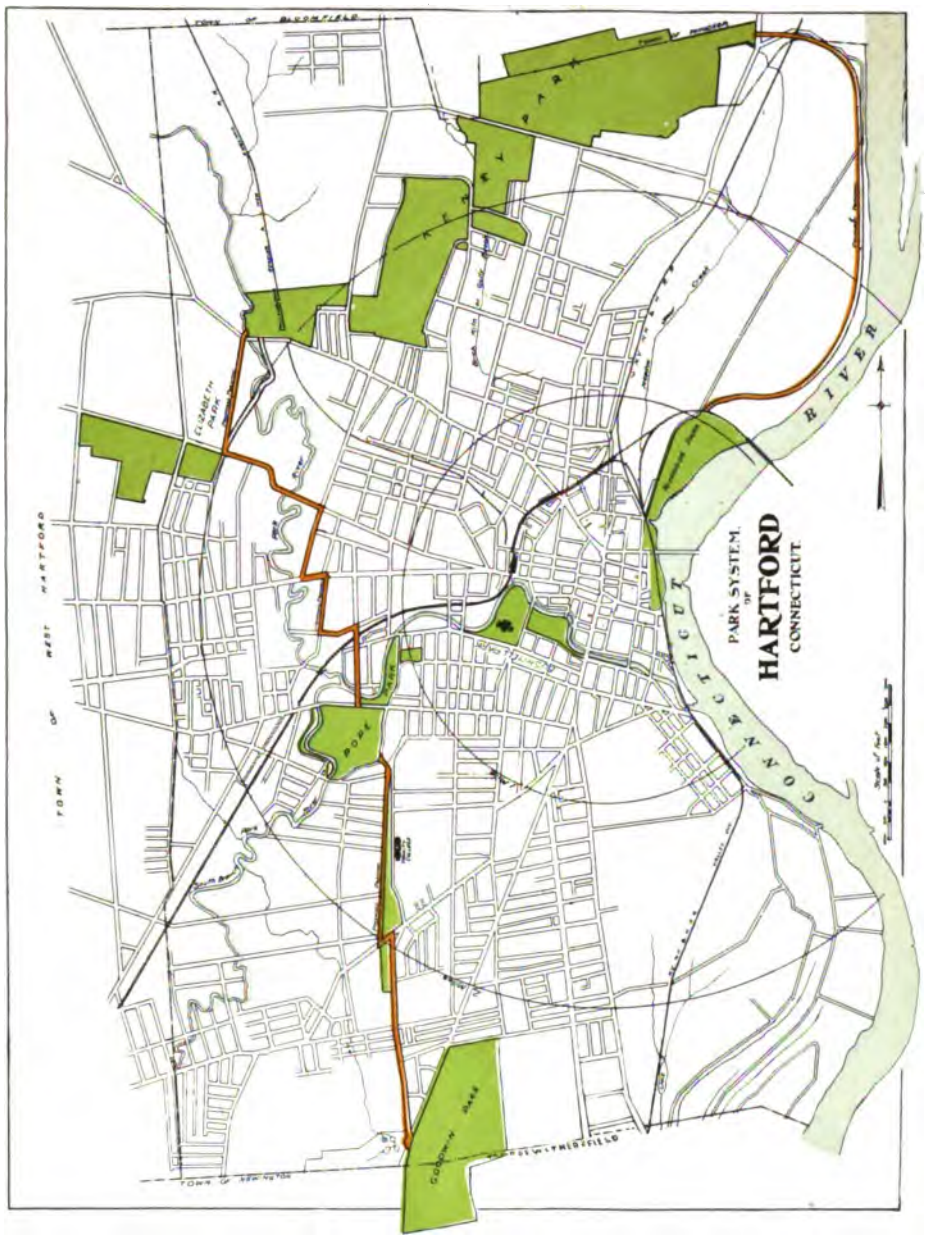
Although Hartford is a small city, with a population of but 80,000 at the last census, it is known far and near as the abode of many people of wealth and culture, who have taken up their residence there on account of its congenial atmosphere and its many attractions. The situation of the union station, the railroad yards, the State House, and the business centre is strongly suggestive of Providence, and it is interesting to note that the Hartford people are using Providence as an object lesson, in order to show from several of our mistakes how to handle their own problems to better advantage. One of the most beautiful and splendid of State House gardens is Bushnell Park, occupying a commanding position in the very centre of the city, on land that was once a most dismal and uninviting expanse. Hartford is now considering the extension of this park over some freight yards in the rear, which are to be abandoned, thus allowing for a "court of honor," about which various public buildings shall be erected as they are needed, beginning with the new State armory. Economy, convenience, and beauty will be promoted by arranging these with reference to each other, and in conformity with a properly comprehensive plan. The parks of Hartford are already largely secured, its present park area being 1,335 acres—more than twice as much as that of Providence—or one acre for every 60 inhabitants. On the water front just south of Riverside Park an extension has been made very recently, and many parkways are proposed to furnish connection between the various parks. All of our cities are coming gradually to realize the value and beauty of their river fronts as public assets, and Hartford, which has long been a leader in so many things that are worthy, is not behind in this. The fine Keney Park, of over 600 acres, was established and has been maintained and improved as a private beneficence, under the able direction of that national authority in park matters, Mr. George A. Parker. As soon as all the improvements are completed it is to be turned over to the city as a gift.

LOS ANGELES.

Private enterprise in Los Angeles has established splendid boulevards and found its profit in the increased value of hitherto undeveloped lands. In the list of cities Los Angeles ranks fourth in park area, with 3,737 acres, and thirty-sixth in population (102,479 in 1900). Griffith Park, distant about seven miles from the city hall, contains 3,015 acres, and there are a dozen other parks maintained last year at a cost of $89,107.

HARRISBURG.

Harrisburg, the capital of Pennsylvania, has secured the lead of Philadelphia in civic improvement. A number of public-spirited citizens got out a report recently on a park system for that city. A campaign was fought upon the question whether or



In addition to connecting its parks, Hartford proposes to group public buildings around Bushnell Park. Riverside Park has very lately been extended.

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not that plan should be adopted in principle, and the candidate who stood for its adoption secured the mayoralty. A very important part of the recommendation is the preservation of the banks of the Susquehanna. The history of the civic improvement movement in Harrisburg is very inspiring.

MEMPHIS.

Memphis was one of the first cities of the middle west to acquire a chain of parks. Overton Park, which is about a mile square, is the largest. Riverside Park is also extensive, and there are numerous small parks scattered about the city. The system is now fairly complete. About a dozen miles of boulevards are shown on the map, extending around three sides of the city. The river front, however, has been much neglected.

NEW HAVEN.

New Haven, with 1,154 acres, possesses twice as much park land as Providence. The magnificent mountain-like East Rock and West Rock parks are the best known, but there are several interesting waterside reservations and valley parks.

There is much interest in the matter of play grounds and the system as a whole, bids fair to be one of the finest and most varied in America.

LYNN.

The parks of Lynn, including the area under the Park Commissioners and that secured by the Water Board, are 1848 acres in extent and the surfaces of the ponds add 599 acres more.

Lynn's most notable park possession is its great forest of 1,000 acres, which is practically a part of the Massachusetts Metropolitan Park System. It is not only a noble and famous pleasure ground, but a valuable adjunct to the public water supply, the park lakes being the storage reservoirs of the city. The beautiful surroundings of Lynn are entirely accessible to the public and are utilized to the fullest possible extent. The ocean front of Lynn gives splendid shore reservations; High Rock Park with its handsome stone observatory, occupies the abrupt eminence in the centre of the city, and fine curving avenues, bordered by beautiful estates, extend along past many rocky promontories and majestic prospects of the sea, to Marblehead and beyond. South of Lynn the great crescent of Revere Beach leads toward Boston, while a long arm of shining sand reaches out from the centre of the city to the island-like Peninsula of Nahant, and separates the waves of the Atlantic from the quiet waters of Lynn Bay.

OTHER CITIES.

ALBANY is famous for its beautiful Washington Park and has an elaborate boulevard system well under way.

SYRACUSE has many parks and the magnificent wide shaded streets extending from its centre in every direction, should be classed as boulevards.

RICHMOND has miles of boulevards leading out to historic battlefields, and extensive parks in every direction.

SPRINGFIELD (MASS.) is making worthy strides in park improvement, and contemplates the establishment of a "civic centre" extending from Main street to the Connecticut river, including the present Court square. The railroads are to be removed from the river front and a long esplanade established.

NEW BEDFORD is much interested in the subject of a connected park system, and Lowell is "considering" such a system. Fall River has useful park lands as yet undeveloped, and has done less than most cities of its size.

In far off Manilla our government has already taken steps to add to the pleasure grounds and recreation places of the Philippine metropolis, and Mr. D. H. Burnham, the chief of the bureau of architects of the Chicago Exposition, has made the preliminary studies for the work.

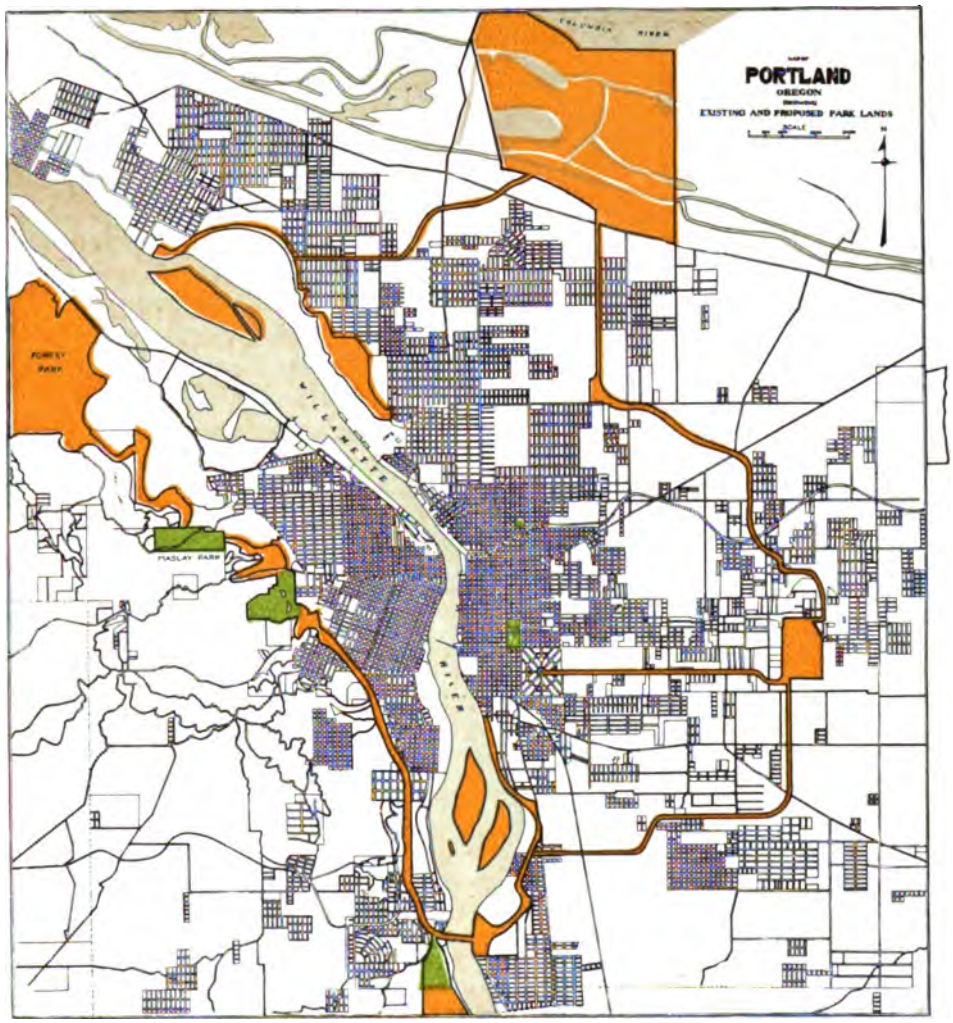
"There are two methods or policies most frequently used in the initiation or carrying out of park systems. One is, and by far the best, to consider the territory and its population as a unit, thereby creating a consistent, well-balanced, economical and profitable series of large and small parks, squares and playgrounds. Such a system has character and dignity, and is also profitable, because it increases the value of all real estate within the district."—*G. A. Parker, Hartford.*

HAVENS OF SWEETNESS AND REST.

"The parks are havens of sweetness and rest for mothers and wives and sweethearts; above all, they are for the children, for all the people, high and low, with equal rights and privileges for every class."—*Andrew Cowan.*

PROSPERITY DEPENDS UPON VITALITY OF LABOR.

"Upon the health, happiness and well-being of the laboring classes must depend no small proportion of the future prosperity of the city. With parks and playgrounds within easy reach, the vitality of every man, woman and child who labors will be increased and his potentiality in every way enhanced."—*H. P. Kelsey in Report on Improvement of Columbia, S. C.*



PORTLAND, OREGON.

The proposed outer park system of Portland, Oregon, shows a clear understanding that provision must be made for the needs of coming generations. At the time that this admirable system was prepared, the city of Seattle employed the same landscape architects, the Messrs. Olmsted, to suggest a similar plan for that city.

In another chapter we have quoted extensively from the very interesting Portland report, because the principles upon which the proposed park system has been designed are equally applicable to Providence.

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PROVIDENCE,

And the Metropolitan District.

The city of Providence, which ranks twentieth in population among American cities, occupies position number 30 in park area. It has less than half the average park area, and expends only a third as much of its revenue as the average city for park purposes.

What is the explanation? Is it because Providence is more niggardly, or because it is more shortsighted, than the other cities of the country? It surely can not be on account of poverty, because its wealth far exceeds that of the average municipality. (See diagram number 2, Report of 1905.)

Something may be said for Providence, however, to offset this woeful showing. Its park areas, inadequate as they are, are varied and well selected. Its one large park is a noble and notable pleasure ground which attracts thousands of people from all over the State and from those parts of Massachusetts and Connecticut that are within a day's excursion distance. (See diagrams number 3 and 4.)

There are splendid grounds surrounding several hospitals and public institutions that have been regarded as among the "show places." There are also public holdings of the water and sewer departments of Providence, Pawtucket, and Central Falls that may be considered as available parts of a park system. There are numerous privately owned resorts where great multitudes of the people gather, but of the permanency of these there is no assurance. The principal parks have been the natural ones, hitherto enjoyed by the trespassing public through the tolerance or indifference of private owners, and so long as these remained, the people did not discern the need of public ownership of other reservations. Access to the bay shores has hitherto been convenient and unrestricted, and the ponds and rivers, whose banks are now being rapidly robbed of their former beauty, have furnished varied opportunities for recreation. All cities are looking to the preservation of their water fronts. Of Providence, it is said, in the Philadelphia report referred to, that "The lines of the existing and proposed parks are largely determined by the streams." A much greater area than appears upon the map will be secured for public purposes because of the admirable use of water and the extensive surfaces of lakes and ponds and rivers that would be included. It would be notable among the cities on account of the multitude of these. Except for the many lakes, the comparison with the Baltimore map would be striking, for here is the upper end of a great bay surrounded by the heart of the city and many little rivers flowing toward this estuary from all directions among the hills.

In population the metropolitan area is most closely matched by that of "Greater Newark," or Essex county in New Jersey, but Essex county has provided more than an acre of parks for each one hundred of its people, while the Metropolitan District of Providence Plantations has as yet but one acre for each 419. Comparing Providence

itself with the other cities of similar population, it seems that, although they generally lack populous suburbs, and the open country is therefore nearer, they all have much greater park equipment. In the group of cities nearest to Providence in population, we find two that were in 1900 slightly larger than Providence. Minneapolis (population 202,718) and Louisville (population 204,731), while Indianapolis (169,000), Kansas City (163,752), St. Paul (163,065), and Rochester (162,608) were a little less populous.

Inadequate Park Expenditures.

The entirely inadequate provision of parks and public grounds compared with those possessed by other cities is illustrated by the comparative diagram (see diagram No. 1) and in the preceding articles upon American Park Systems. It is further indicated by the diagrams in last year's report which showed that the people of this metropolitan district have paid out of their revenues less than one third as much as the people of the "average city," the average being taken from the twenty-four American cities which exceed 150,000 people. The average city devotes two and three-quarters per cent. of its income to parks and public grounds, while Providence and Pawtucket devote only about three-quarters of one per cent. to such purposes. This is not on account of poverty, for Providence is fifty per cent. more wealthy than the "average city" and with one or two exceptions is the wealthiest, per inhabitant, of any in the whole list. It evidently prefers to exercise its prodigality in other ways.

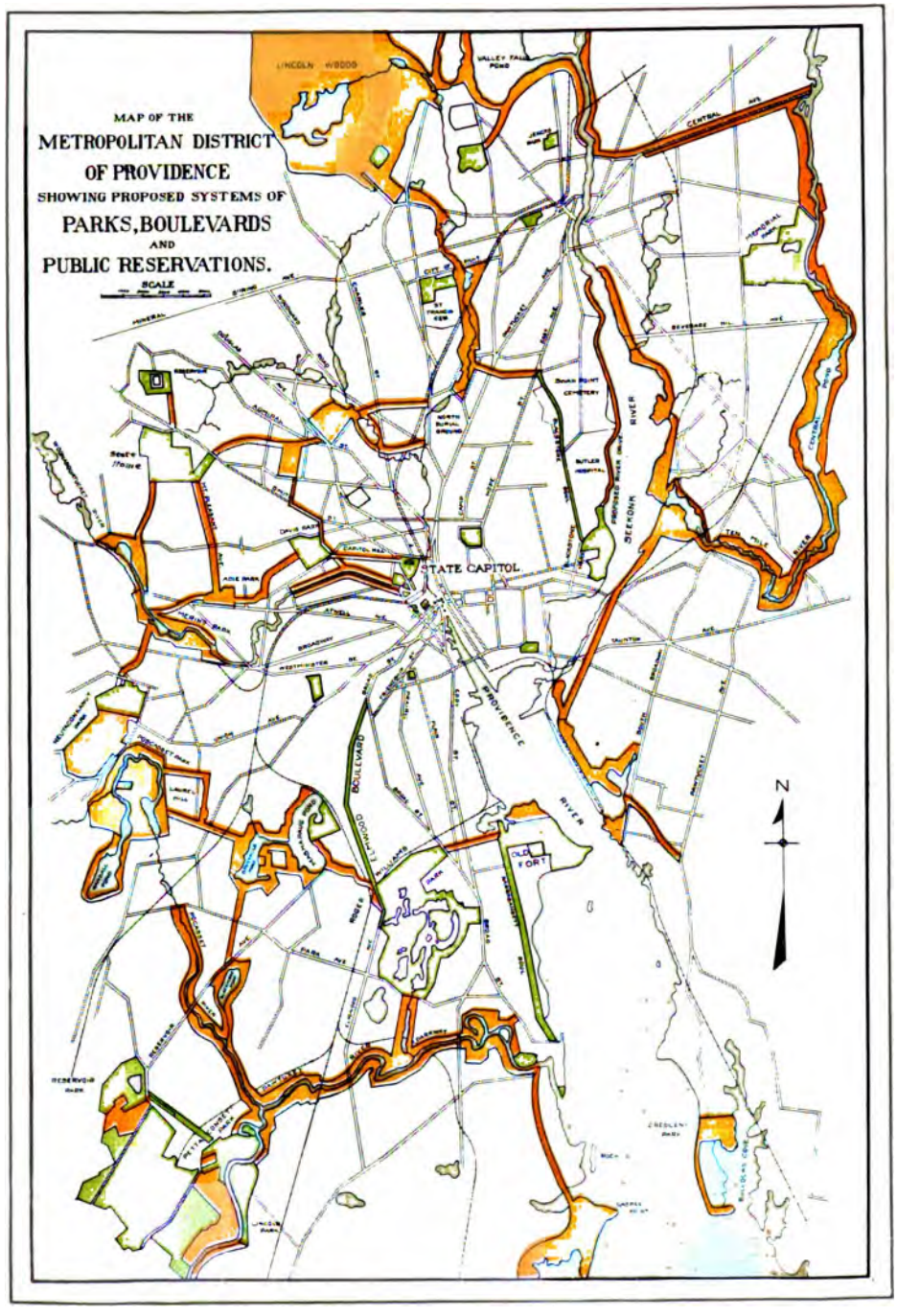
Latest Additions to Park System.

A resolution adopted by the city council of Providence, May 21, 1906, calls for the expenditure of $200,000, which is to be borrowed. With this sum it is expected to secure certain additions to Blackstone Park; a very small park on Broadway, and a larger one near Messer street; a tract containing about six acres on Cemetery street, a portion of the so-called Corliss, or West River Park; the completion of the playgrounds and speedway at Roger Williams park—begun long ago—and a section of the so-called Pleasant Valley parkway, some 7,200 feet in length, extending from Promenade street, at the bend of the Woonasquatucket river (see pages 76 and 77), along the east side of Davis Park and the valley of the brook, as shown upon the large map, to Academy avenue. The importance of this parkway is set forth elsewhere in this book, and with the hoped-for improvement of the river banks all the way to the Union Station and Public Garden, would provide the key of the whole park system.

Another resolution adopted at the same time provides for the dedication, for playground purposes, of certain land already owned by the city.

These additions, altogether amounting to about sixty-three acres, will improve local conditions, but it is evident that such provision is quite inadequate even for the present needs.

Pawtucket is devoting $10,000 this year to the improvement of Memorial Park, but is almost wholly lacking in small parks and is still far behind most cities of its class.


MAP OF THE
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
OF PROVIDENCE
SHOWING PROPOSED SYSTEMS OF
PARKS, BOULEVARDS
AND
PUBLIC RESERVATIONS.
SCALE
LINCOLN WOODS
STATE CAPITOL
PROVIDENCE
SEEKONK
RIVER
BOULEVARD
OLD FORT
N

THE
PUBL

ASTOR, L AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

NOTES ON THE MAP.

Explanation of the Large Map.

The large map which is presented with this report has been prepared at the office of the city engineer of Providence, and by his courtesy. Many months of labor have been involved, since no previous satisfactory map existed showing this district as a whole. Much assistance has been given by the city engineer of Pawtucket, the chief engineer of the Rhode Island Company, and many others, and every available authority has been sought for.

The scale, which is about two inches to the mile, is sufficient to show nearly all the existing streets without making the sheet too large for handling. Important public buildings are indicated by name, and the more extensive of the manufacturing establishments are indicated but not named. Names are given of the more important thoroughfares, and of the hills, rivers, lakes, and neighborhoods.

Existing parks, and other public lands including those under the jurisdiction of the water and sewer departments, are shown in solid green. Cemeteries and grounds of semi-public institutions to which the public has some access, and which may be expected to remain open lands, are indicated by shading which is explained in the key at the bottom of the map. The proposed parks or reservations are indicated in diagonal green shading, though the small scale of the map precludes absolute exactness and often covers special small parcels of real estate containing churches, factories, or public resorts, which the Metropolitan Commission would hardly advise buying, since agreement with their owners would accomplish all necessary ends.

Metropolitan District like one city.

The map shows in a striking way how like one city the whole district is getting to be, with its platted area and built-up districts covering a distance from north to south of nearly fourteen miles, and a closely welded chain of settlements extending even beyond the limits of the map, up the river valleys and along the shores of the bay.

The preparation of the map has demonstrated how rapidly the process of unifying has been going on.

The basis of the work was the government map published in 1894 from the surveys made in 1887, and many scattered and individual settlements shown on that map, with bare stretches of intervening country, have now become continuous. More than fifty per cent. of the mileage of the streets and highways has come into existence since the earlier map, and the total number of the streets is now estimated to exceed 4,000. The chance of any considerable area remaining unoccupied or open to the people of the next generation, unless it is taken under public control, is very remote.

The district in which the municipal improvements of public water and lights, curbed and graded streets, and other appearances of a city are manifest, extends in a general

way about seven miles to the north and an equal distance to the south of the State capitol, which is taken as the centre of the circles. East and west the urban district extends about four miles either way, being bounded by steep hills on the west and the line of another state on the east. It is one of the largest platted areas in the United States. City and town lines are almost wholly disregarded in the extension of the streets and the settlement of the people, and considered as one community it ranks eleventh among the population centres of the country. About sixty street car lines radiate from the vicinity of Exchange place, and the district which they reach is exceeded in population by no more than four or five areas of equal extent in the whole country.

Places for Recreation.

Upon the map is found an immense assortment of ponds and lakes—a number of them being of artificial creation,—and nine river valleys of various sizes. Although there are no single striking features of a remarkably impressive or sublime character, the contour is unusually varied and beautiful. The streams that flow through the district all give rise to problems which public reservations are useful in solving, and two or three, which have already suffered much pollution, point interesting morals for the proper care of the others. The steep hills, especially on the west, suggest future street transportation problems similar to those now so troublesome on account of the bad layout of College Hill. The water supply taken from the Ten Mile river, the Pawtuxet river, and Abbott's Run is no more than adequate for present demands of the district, and this, as well as the manufacturing interests that use the water power upon these rivers, and upon the Blackstone and Woonasquatucket, calls for the preservation of all wooded areas in the watersheds of these streams.

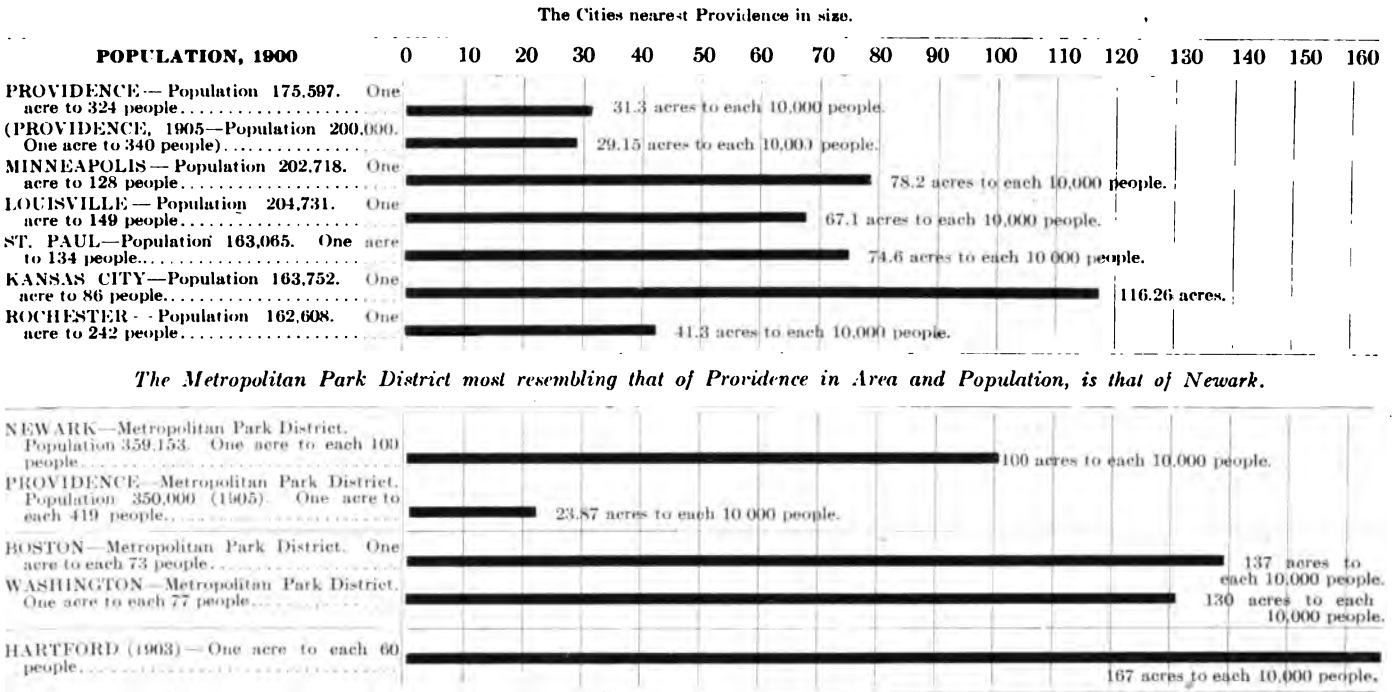
The proposed boulevards shown upon this map, and the diagram of existing highways shown upon plan No. 10, indicate the need of boulevards along both shores of the bay to save much distance in travelling and to provide attractive drives within sight of the salt water. At present most of the necessary connecting links are not difficult of acquirement.

Park Circuits Outlined.

Davis Park is taken as the nearest point at which the proposed system of parks could approach the centre of Providence, and from this point Exchange place may be agreeably reached by either one of the two suggested ways. (See plan 7.) From here, inner circuits of park reservations and connecting drives extend around the city on the south and on the north, meeting at Red Bridge on the Seekonk river. Another circuit, enclosing Pawtucket and Central Falls, is shown joining the northern circuit near the North Burial Ground and again at the mouth of the Ten Mile river. The Pawtuxet river reservation may join the southern circuit by several feasible ways, and a desirable northwest circuit is proposed, to cross Fruit Hill and extend by the reservoir on that hill and by the Wenscott reservoir beyond, to Stump Hill on the north. The upper shores of the Woonasquatucket river and the region west of Neutaconkanut Hill, while rich in woodland

COMPARISON OF PARK AREAS TO NUMBER OF PEOPLE.

Number of Acres of Public Grounds to each 10,000 of the Population.



Several of these cities have greatly increased their park acreage since 1900.

The above diagram is made up from elaborate tables, prepared by Mr. G. A. Parker, of Hartford —recognized as the best authority on park statistics, Vice-President of the American Civic Association. They were taken from the best procurable information—the last United States Census and other sources.

DIAGRAM NO. 1.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

and lakes and high hills, and very available for large reservations, have not as yet been given careful study.

Rank among American Industrial Centres.

When new enterprises are being considered, population reports usually receive a deal of attention. In Providence it is customary to think of two hundred thousand people as the total, but it is full time to understand that the metropolitan district as a whole should always be taken account of. It is not generally realized how populous and important this district really is. By the census of 1905 the cities and towns of the community shown upon the map, not counting the portion of Massachusetts indicated, contained 351,836 people. The increase is at least 10,000 per year, and the basis of 360,000 for the present population is therefore approximately correct.

Growth and Manufactures.

Considered as a unit, it stood, in 1900, sixth among the industrial centres of America in capital invested and wage earners employed, and fifth in wages paid. It stood first in the production of fine woolen fabrics, in jewelry and silverware, and second in several other great industries—fine machines and machine tools being among them. The astonishing increase of more than 22 per cent. in the capital and manufactured products of the State during the last five years certainly indicates that it is more than maintaining its relative rank. These things should not be lost sight of in making proper provision for the future. It will be poor policy to make public improvements on too small a scale.

The shopping trade of Providence and Pawtucket shows an enormous increase within a few years, due to the prosperity and growth of the surrounding districts, the higher rates of wages paid, and especially to the constant extension of the trolley lines.

Metropolis of a Million People.

While the community of Providence Plantations contains more than a third of a million people, the larger district of which it is the natural shopping centre and metropolis contains over one million. (See diagram No. 2). A still larger circle shows the population within the convenient limit of a single day's excursion—the people who might be expected as occasional visitors, if "Greater Providence" has any special attraction to offer them. (See diagram No. 3.) More people can come to Narragansett Bay for a day's outing than may reach any other shore resorts in North or South America except those near New York and Philadelphia.

Financial Value of Attractions.

In these facts we see a great business reason for making the most of every opportunity to draw the people who are just outside our gates. The gates should be opened wide and the welcome within most hospitable. Every possible attraction should be provided—of fine streets, public amusements, well-filled stores, museums and schools, and parks and fine drives. This is the only way to hold our own in the shopping trade of the populous territory that is more accessible to Providence than to any other large city. Boston fully realizes the commercial importance of such things, and profits much thereby.

Concern of the State.

Herein also lies the great concern of the State as a whole, for much more than three-quarters of all the sources of the State's revenue is in this metropolitan district, and the prosperity of Rhode Island depends, to a greater extent than does that of any other State, in the prosperity of one single metropolis.

Lack of Fine Streets.

The present lack of attractive streets in this district is a subject for surprise. Unlike most cities, there is no avenue which is well built for a single mile of its length, nor is there any district of considerable extent in which there is any assurance or guarantee of continued attractiveness to anyone who would build an expensive residence. In this, Providence is certainly peculiar among cities of its class.

The provision of boulevards with such building restrictions as are elsewhere common enough would probably create a "boom" in the building of fine houses by that large number of citizens who are "waiting to decide," and the tax valuation would be immensely increased.

Park systems have been called the luxuries of the rich and the necessities of the poor, but while the poor must have them, well-to-do citizens surely do not object to a few luxuries. Within a single year it is probable that they have made a greater expenditure within this metropolitan district for the single luxury of automobiles than the cost of the whole proposed park system. In a few years more, after these "buzz cars" have all been relegated to the scrap iron heap, an entire new crop will be ready to speed along the attractive drives of the metropolitan parks.

Cost, Compared with other Public Enterprises.

In the bond issue now asked for, although Providence would have a little larger proportion to pay than the other parts of the district, its gross amount would be less than one-quarter of the amount of franchise tax that the city receives from the gas company; about one-sixth as much as that from the electric lighting company, or about one-twelfth as much as it gets annually from the street car franchise. It would be one-eighth of one per cent. of the city's income, or about three-quarters of one per cent. of the annual cost of the schools, or two per cent. of the annual cost of maintaining the highways. The street lighting costs 45 times as much as this park investment would demand. These are all necessities of municipal life, and the park system is a necessity also. No burden that any possible park system would impose is likely to be noticeable among the city's expenditures.

"The mass of humanity in cities make a reason why thinking men have been forced to consider the question of air holes or open spaces in the shape of parks, promenades, and boulevards. Already London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Paris, Frankfort, and New York have taken steps to furnish breathing spaces in their densely populated portions—tearing down solid blocks of buildings at enormous cost—but *nothing costs a city like disease.*"

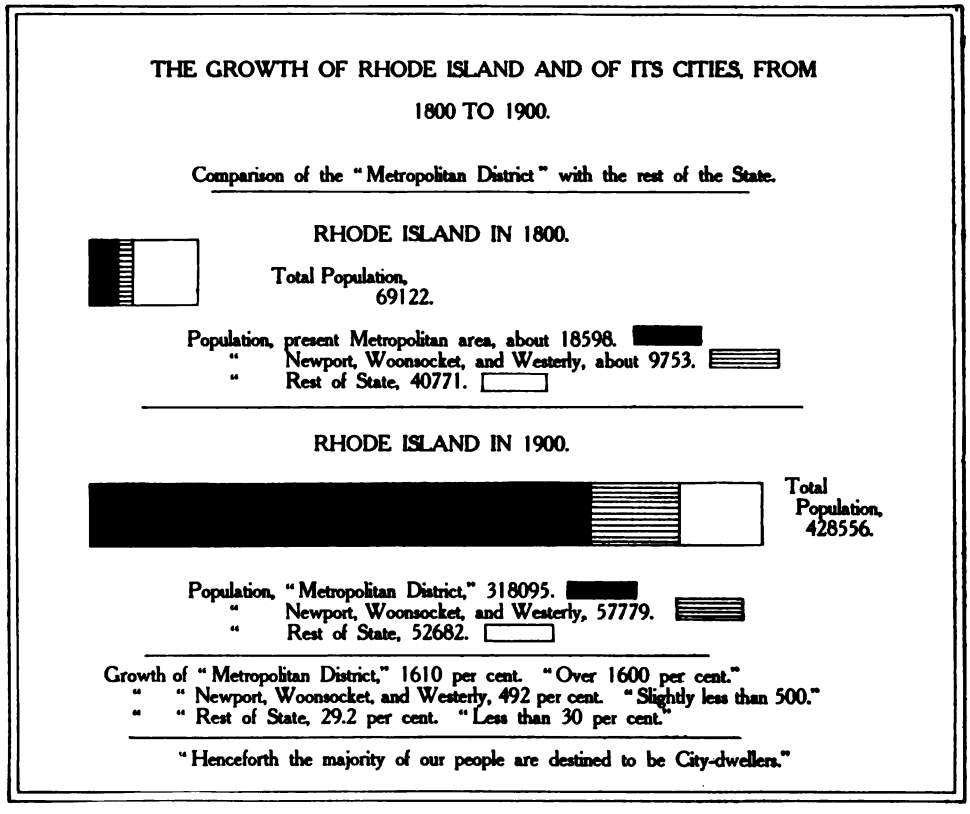


Diagram No. 2.—The People of Rhode Island are Rapidly Becoming "City Dwellers."

"The rapid growth of cities in the last fifty years marks a new epoch in the history of mankind. In 1850 but twelve and one-half per cent. of the people of the United States lived in cities. In 1900 the per centage had increased to 33 for the whole United States." In Rhode Island, however, 95 per cent. of the people are now classed by the U. S. government census as city dwellers. This far exceeds the proportion in any other State, and gives rise to many new and serious problems.

A TRADE AND POPULATION CENTRE.

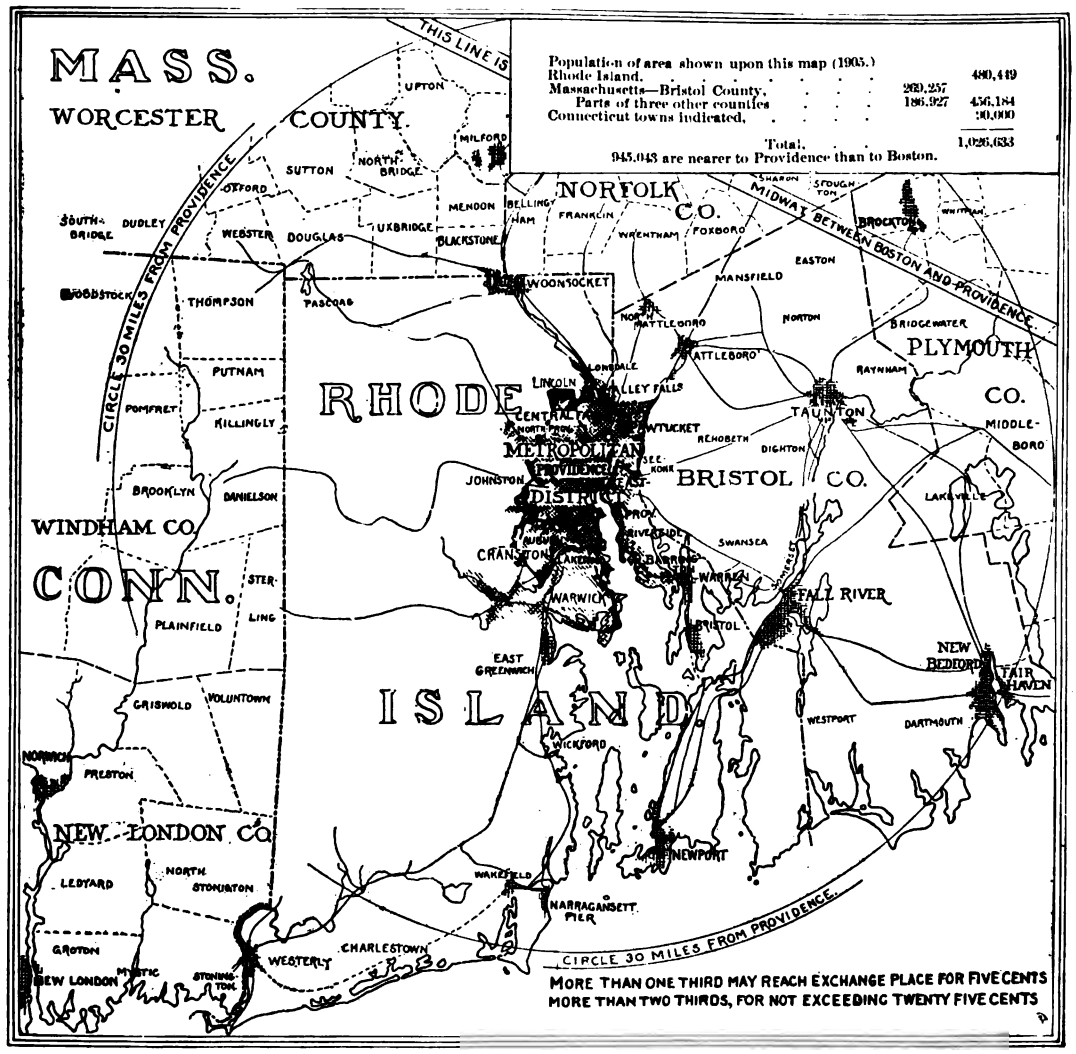


Diagram No. 3.—Showing the population naturally tributary to the "Providence Plantations" District.

Eastern and Southern Massachusetts and Rhode Island are believed to possess more miles of steam and street railway, more automobiles to travel with, and more wealth per inhabitant than any other districts of similar size in the world. Rhode Island is the most thickly settled State in the country. Massachusetts comes next.

Herein lies the opportunity to cater to an extremely large number of regular visitors and patrons, an opportunity excelled by not more than four or five cities in all America.

THE GREAT POPULATION CENTRES.

THE POPULATION CIRCLE DRAWN AROUND PROVIDENCE, RANKS THIRD IN IMPORTANCE IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE.

The 80-mile circle is selected, in this comparison, as properly representing the convenient limit of a single day's excursion.

(The Providence and Boston Circles.)

The head of Narragansett Bay has more dwellers within 80 miles than any other American Harbor save those of New York and Philadelphia.

The 80-mile circles from	New York,	estimated	1905,	population,	7,235,314
"	Philadelphia,	"	"	"	4,745,496
"	**Providence,**	"	"	"	**3,983,629**
"	Chicago,	"	"	"	3,030,005
"	Baltimore,	"	"	"	2,546,801

No other circles of similar radius that can be drawn in any other portion of the Western Hemisphere, contain over 2,000,000 people.

DIAGRAM NO. 4.

SOME LESSONS FROM SAN FRANCISCO.

San Francisco furnishes an impressive lesson to teach the value of wide avenues and connecting parkways. Had the metropolis at the Golden Gate been laid out upon some such plan as Mr. Burnham had already prepared for its alteration, the conflagration would have been localized and confined to much more limited areas. As it was, the wide open space at the foot of Market street saved the Great Ferry Station, the loss of which at that particular time would have been a more serious calamity than the destruction of any other building in the city.

By means of dynamite and the guns of the United States army, trained for the first time against the structures of a friendly city, millions of dollars worth of splendid buildings were destroyed to provide open areas which the flames should not cross. It was thus that the victorious on-rush of the great fire was halted at Van Ness avenue and a third of the city was saved.

If it is too much to ask that multitudes of buildings shall be levelled in order that our own city may be reconstructed, as San Francisco now promises to be, at least we may demand that all those newer parts, which are surely destined to be the abiding places of great populations within a very measurable time, shall be properly planned in advance. There must be room for light and air, and more playgrounds than are found in the older neighborhoods. The public heritage of beauty and the natural values of location must not be squandered or lost, and the need of wide spaces to restrict possible conflagrations should not be lost sight of. Providence is generally considered to be outside of any "earthquake zone," yet Charlestown, S. C., which suffered a great disaster only a few years ago, was similarly considered. Surely it is not impossible to conceive of some combination of circumstances that might damage the water supply or render it unavailing. In such a case, the many lakes and rivers would be of greatest value. So long as they are kept open, there will always be water to pump for fire purposes. If they are uncontaminated, there will never be any great danger of suffering in any emergency.

Had Baltimore lacked water to fight its great fire of 1904, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the destruction would have been quite as complete, for like San Francisco and Chicago, and Boston in 1873, it had narrow streets and but little open space to furnish either rallying places for the firemen or barriers to the flames.

San Francisco, with its tens of thousands of homeless citizens camped upon the hospitable slopes of Golden Gate Park, the Presidio, and many smaller parks, has new cause to rejoice in the ownership of such reservations. The public lands, created for the enjoyment and recreation of the people, have served another useful purpose as their dwelling place.

"As the population moved on, carrying as much as it possibly could, it thanked Heaven for the open space of the park, which meant safety.

"*And as to the practical, dollar-and-cent benefit of a system of wide boulevards, does San Francisco want any better proof than she has just had. The experience of the fire-fighters at Van Ness Avenue, destitute of water as they were, has shown that any one of Mr. Burnham's proposed lines of boulevards could have been made an impregnable wall against the advance of any conflagration. Whatever else may be questioned, one would think that there would be no objection in San Francisco now to any amount of street widening.*

"*San Francisco will be fair beyond any beauty she has known before. The new San Francisco will be a city beautiful enough to make us look with solemn acceptance upon a betterment purchased even at such a deadly cost.*"—S. E. Moffett, in *Collier's*, May 12, 1906.

In many ways does the disaster at San Francisco bring suggestion to the park question. Whenever a city grows great and populous, it is only by public and united action that the conditions for healthy and happy lives may be preserved to the great majority of its citizens. The disaster that may come to the minds and souls and physical well-being of the multitude from the congestion of cities is no less terrible because it envelopes them slowly, and is not accompanied by the crash of falling walls and the lurid glare upon the sky.

When the heavy hand of fate falls suddenly, the world is stupefied for a moment, and then the generous heart of the nation responds to aid the stricken ones who, for the time being, are deprived of their comforts and such happiness as was in their former surroundings. But when disaster steals upon a community more quietly, and obliterates for all time, not the temporary creations of man,—which can be readily replaced,—but the glorious gifts of nature, which have given to it its very reason for existing at all,—the calamity seems not to be so easily recognized There is no outpouring of public sympathy, and seldom indeed is any deserved, for the fault is in its own short-sightedness and folly. Such a city is already on the wane.

If "Greater Providence" shall grow ugly under the mistaken idea that utility and beauty have no partnership; if all its natural exquisiteness of surroundings shall be stripped ruthlessly away, through private greed and public indifference, let it be known that here, indeed, will be a stricken city, more sorely and more hopelessly bereft than ever it could be by fire or by the quaking of the earth.

In America, at least, a great conflagration has always brought wider streets and better buildings; a cleaning out of the slums; a sudden acquirement of buoyancy and hope and civic pride. The misfortunes of the moment have ever given vitality to the after life of every devastated town. It is the dry rot of indifference that permanently blights and kills. San Francisco, with its present opportunity to remake itself, will rise gloriously into a much more splendid existence than it has ever known before, and when a dozen years have passed may smile pityingly upon her sister cities that have been stifled by their lack of ambition or by the sordid commercialism that wastes its opportunities and exhausts its heritage in niggardly endeavor to be "practical" and frugal.—H. A. B.

THE PALACE AND THE COUNTRY SEAT OF THE PEOPLE.

"The city is the palace and the country seat of the masses of its people. For the great bulk of the people the city itself—its streets and house walls and monuments—must give them whatever of beauty and of dignity they are to have in their daily surroundings, and its parks must be their substitute for country estates.

"The Parisian workman may sleep in a slum, but he lives in a palace. It is when he is out of doors that he is truly at home. Then he may feel himself joint owner and occupant of such a dwelling place as Rockefeller or Carnegie could not command for his exclusive use."—Samuel E. Moffett, in Collier's Weekly.

ALL PROGRESS HINGES ON ENVIRONMENT.

"The one important factor in the evolution of a plant is environment. Environment treats of the physical, mental, and moral condition that surrounds the individual. Environment can overcome, in degree, even adverse hereditary conditions. Hence, all progress hinges on a betterment of environment.

"The Materio Medica of twenty-five years ago is obsolete. Good doctors no longer treat symptoms; less medicine is the rule and more fresh air and exercise.

"Where the ideal city will be, no man can say. But we have in America a growing hunger for beauty.

"Big things can only be accomplished when backed by public opinion and public patronage."—The Philistine.

"A city that does not acknowledge the necessity for public parks, as a means for promoting the welfare and happiness of its people, and recognize the substantial advantages that follow the making of a city attractive and comfortable as a place of residence, is not progressing, but is already on the wane."—Andrew Cowan

THE LOWER WOONASQUATUCKET.

AS IT IS, AND AS IT OUGHT TO BE.

"Every great city will be tested in the future by its manner of treating its rivers. The Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck run through the heart of the town. They are for the most part neglected streams, muddy and filth laden. The Woonasquatucket especially, would respond to enlightened treatment. Trees should be planted without delay and plans adopted whereby the locality can be saved from the activity of the ash dumper and the shanty builder, and eventually become the centre of the city beautiful." — *Prov. Journal Editorial.*

9. THE LOWER WOONASQUATUCKET.
THE AMERICAN WAY.

"What we want is to embank the river, to bring out a fine class of buildings to the very river's edge, and to enhance five-fold the value of real estate, and increase ten-fold the amount of taxes received from that portion of the city, and there we have an argument which should be convincing to the veriest Philistine. And then we have the thing after it is finished:—a river properly regulated, well embanked, with a dignified city coming up to the edge of it; with a splendid tree-line; a boulevard and dignified buildings;—all treated in the way a city demands." . . .—*Frank Miles Day.*

This is the European way of "adapting a narrow public margin along a stream for use by many people." The river is made the object of greatest delight and beauty of all the features of the town. It gives character to all the surroundings. "No city in America has yet treated its river as it ought to be treated. Within the next twenty-five years many cities will have made good beginnings."

10. THE RIVER OUZE—BEDFORD, ENGLAND.
THE FOREIGN WAY.

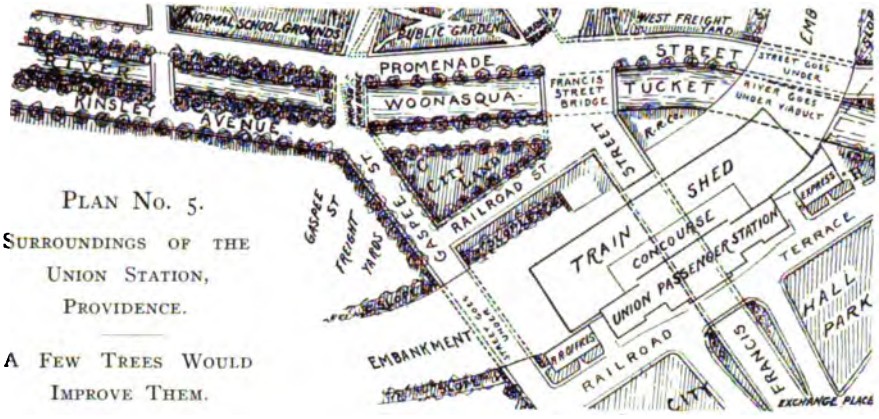
11. THE WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER.
Three minutes' walk from Union Station. Davis Park is straight ahead.

EXCHANGE PLACE TO DAVIS PARK.

From the center of Providence all of the ways to the suburbs are closely built and narrow, except in one direction. In the undeveloped northwest section—so long cut off from the rest of the town by the waters of the old cove and the multitude of railroad tracks—it is even now possible, at slight cost, to construct two boulevards which shall reach the proposed parkways and lead to the favorable development of the largest unoccupied areas within the city limits. At the starting point just north of the railroad station, is the city land between Francis, Promenade, and Gaspee streets, which has been officially designated "The Public Garden," although it still remains unkempt and barren. This land and the adjoining public properties should be developed according to a harmonious and comprehensive plan.

This picture of an artificial waterway created for a wholly utilitarian purpose, shows how easily the banks of the Woonasquatucket might be made attractive instead of forbidding and repulsive.

12. CANAL BANK AT ANNE STREET, LOWELL.
Trees and grassy edges make a mighty difference.

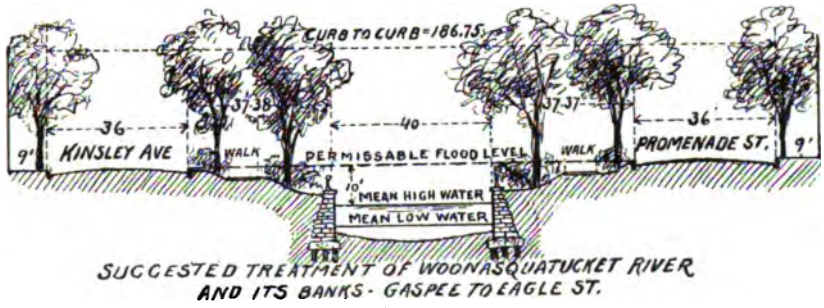


PLAN NO. 5.

SURROUNDINGS OF THE UNION STATION, PROVIDENCE.

A FEW TREES WOULD IMPROVE THEM.

Around this "civic centre" of splendid possibilities,—which may be called the great portal of the city,—are located the finest and most important of our public buildings, and the open spaces give generous opportunity for noble embellishment. From here the first and most direct way to reach the proposed park system leads along the Woonasquatucket river to Davis Park. It is 6,900 feet from the city hall to Davis mansion. From the Francis street bridge, Promenade street and Kinsley avenue are already laid out and with the river, occupy a space over two hundred feet in width, extending as far as the Locomotive Works. The improvement of the river banks; the planting of four lines of trees; and some rebuilding of these parallel streets, would provide a splendid boulevard from the very center of the city, and connecting with the new Pleasant Valley Parkway, will guarantee the future of all the great northwest district, including Fruit Hill and Mount Pleasant, which is in much need of a proper approach.



SUGGESTED TREATMENT OF WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER AND ITS BANKS - GASPEE TO EAGLE ST.

ENGINEERING FEATURES BASED ON PLAN OF W.T. HATCH, ESQ.

CHANNEL NARROWED TO 40 FT.
BANKS HOLLOWED TO PROVIDE FLOOD BASIN.

PLAN NO. 6.

Across the Dumping Grounds.—Site of proposed Capitol Avenue.

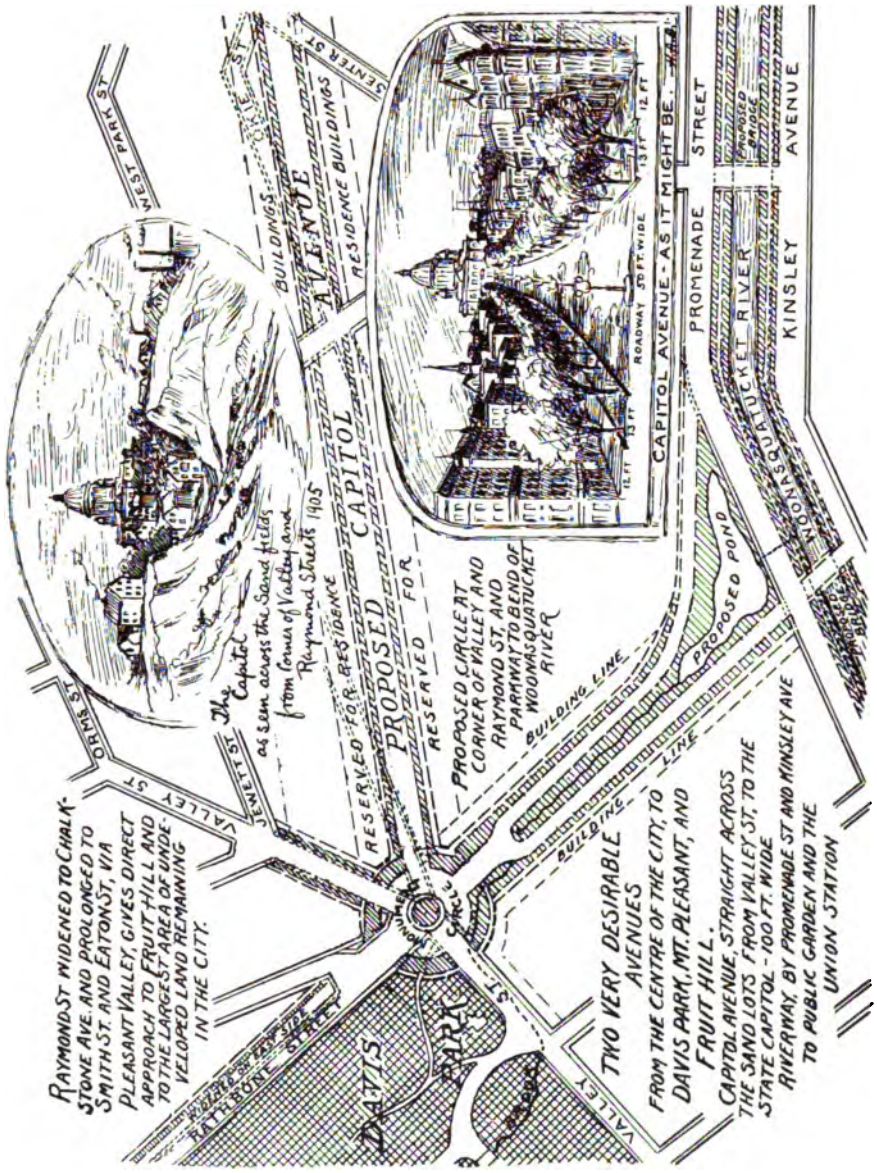
Another desirable way has been indicated, and called, for convenience, "Capitol Avenue." This would extend straight out from the dome of the State House toward Davis Park, which it would reach at the corner of Valley and Rathbone streets. (See plan No. 7.) Very few buildings would require removal, and much taxable property would be created where now are only ash heaps and sand piles There should be building restrictions to insure good occupancy. With the park at one end, and the majestic capitol dome at the other, the possibilities suggest the avenues of Washington.

The Back Bay district of Boston once resembled this region. The value of the Back Bay lands after the establishment of the park and street improvements "trebled in thirteen years, while the valuation of the rest of the city increased only eighteen per cent. The increased taxes on this land aggregated over two millions of dollars. The taxes on new buildings yield one and a half millions more."—*Report of Boston Park Commission.*

13. View from Davis Park toward the Union Station.

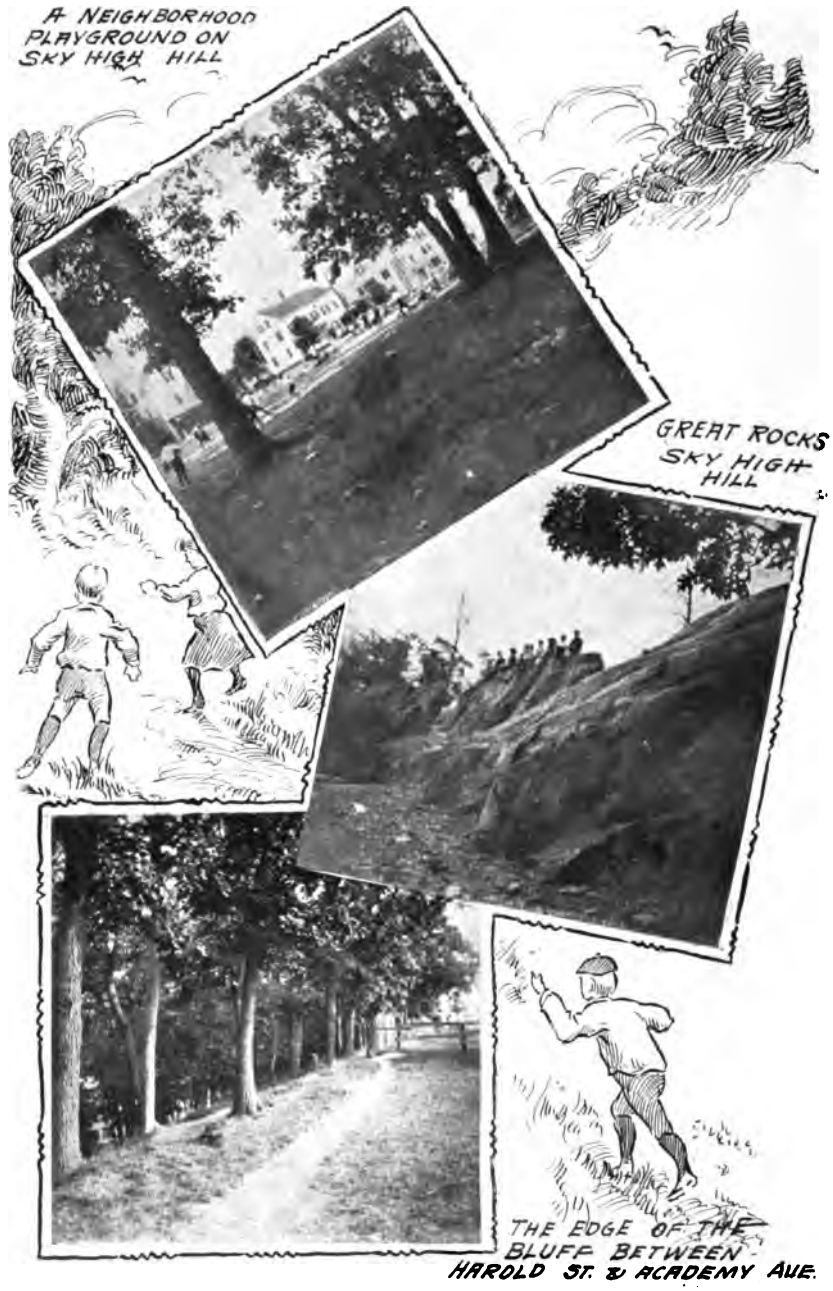
The station is straight down the river, just under the court house tower.

The Pleasant Valley Parkway will be built across this rubbish covered foreground and furnish direct connection with the Fruit Hill and Mount Pleasant districts. Capitol avenue ought also to be provided, straight toward the State House dome.



PLAN NO. 7. PROPOSED APPROACHES TO DAVIS PARK AND THE MT. PLEASANT AND FRUIT HILL DISTRICTS.

They would add millions to the tax value of undeveloped lands in the northwest part of Providence.



14. Mt. Pleasant. The Edge and the Summit.
Where will the children of these children play?

15. TOP OF BLUFF BETWEEN HAROLD STREET AND ACADEMY AVENUE.
Overlooking lower Olneyville section.

Steep bluffs like this, wooded in their natural condition and rising sharply from thirty to ninety feet above flat river valleys to equally flat table lands above, are characteristic features of the whole metropolitan district. The steep bank s should be reserved for a park. Along the top, near the edge, should extend a road, giving opportunity for a fine line of building lots on the opposite side, overlooking the park.

DAVIS PARK TO MOUNT PLEASANT.

Regent avenue should be widened from Davis Park to Harold street, or a new street should curve along the edge of the bluff. Beyond Harold street, the sides of this bluff are now heavily wooded, and such streets as have been laid out along the bottom have followed the natural conformation of the land.

The streets on the top of the bluff end in a "jumping-off place." An avenue from Harold street, laid out along the edge, would join these streets and provide a direct way to Academy avenue grammar school. Its convenience is demonstrated by the present well-beaten paths.

The outlooks over the valley are commanding, and the fine hillside grove of chestnuts and oaks possesses much attraction. The avenue should cross Academy avenue and continue up Mt. Pleasant to "Glacier Point" on "Sky High Hill."

16. "GLACIER POINT" ON "SKY HIGH HILL"

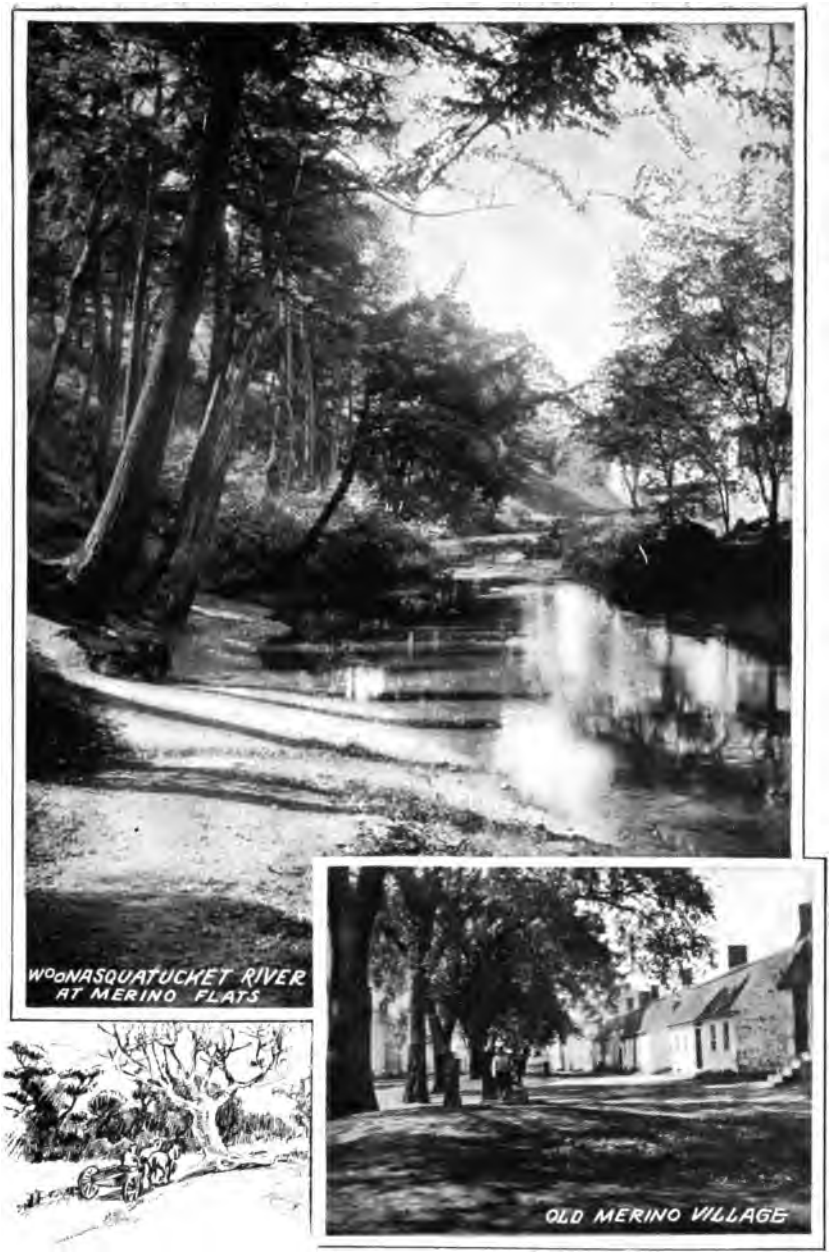
The diagonal lines upon the rock, and the smooth worn surface in the foreground, tell of the great glacier that ground its way over the hill more than 30,000 years ago. "As the vast mass of ice swept slowly along it carried boulders along, too, and they ground the ledges smooth in much the same way as a carpenter with a block and sandpaper might smooth an unplaned board." *Dr. C. H. Leonard.*

GLACIER POINT.

On the highest part of Mt. Pleasant, a short distance west of the Academy avenue school, is a grove that extends for several hundred feet along Atwells avenue. For a long time it has served as a recreation ground to the neighborhood. There is a little base ball diamond, and many rude seats and swings under the trees. Recently, however, the property has changed hands and the grove is fast vanishing. The great rock which crowns the summit, is a feature of especial interest.

The late Professor Packard wrote: "Upon this glaciated summit the polished surface and the ice marks are as fresh as any I have seen in the Alps, the Pyrenees, or in Norway, next to the glaciers themselves. For years I have been taking my classes there as a wonderful object lesson. Mt. Pleasant, with its glacial garden, should be made into a park."

If Fort Independence appeals to us as a record of recent history, this rock is no less interesting and valuable to those who read upon its battered surface the history of past ages when the earth was young.



17. Merino Flats and the Woonasquatucket Valley. A Natural Park.

The steep hillsides and the broad valley have long been the playground and meeting place of thousands of Olneyville's mill population. The reservation should extend at least to Manton bridge. The attractive lowlands are subject to occasional overflows and are of but little commercial value, but their withdrawal from public use would be a serious calamity

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18. "One standing on this eminence is reminded of the prospects from Heidelberg, Richmond Hill, Windsor, Belvoir, or Sterling Castle. The whole combines in furnishing the natural beauties and essentials of a unique and noble park."—*Augustine Jones.*

An extension of the curving road along the summit, a few paths and shelters from storms, and the easy alteration of a little swamp into a permanent lake, are about all the improvements that are necessary at present upon this magnificent hill.

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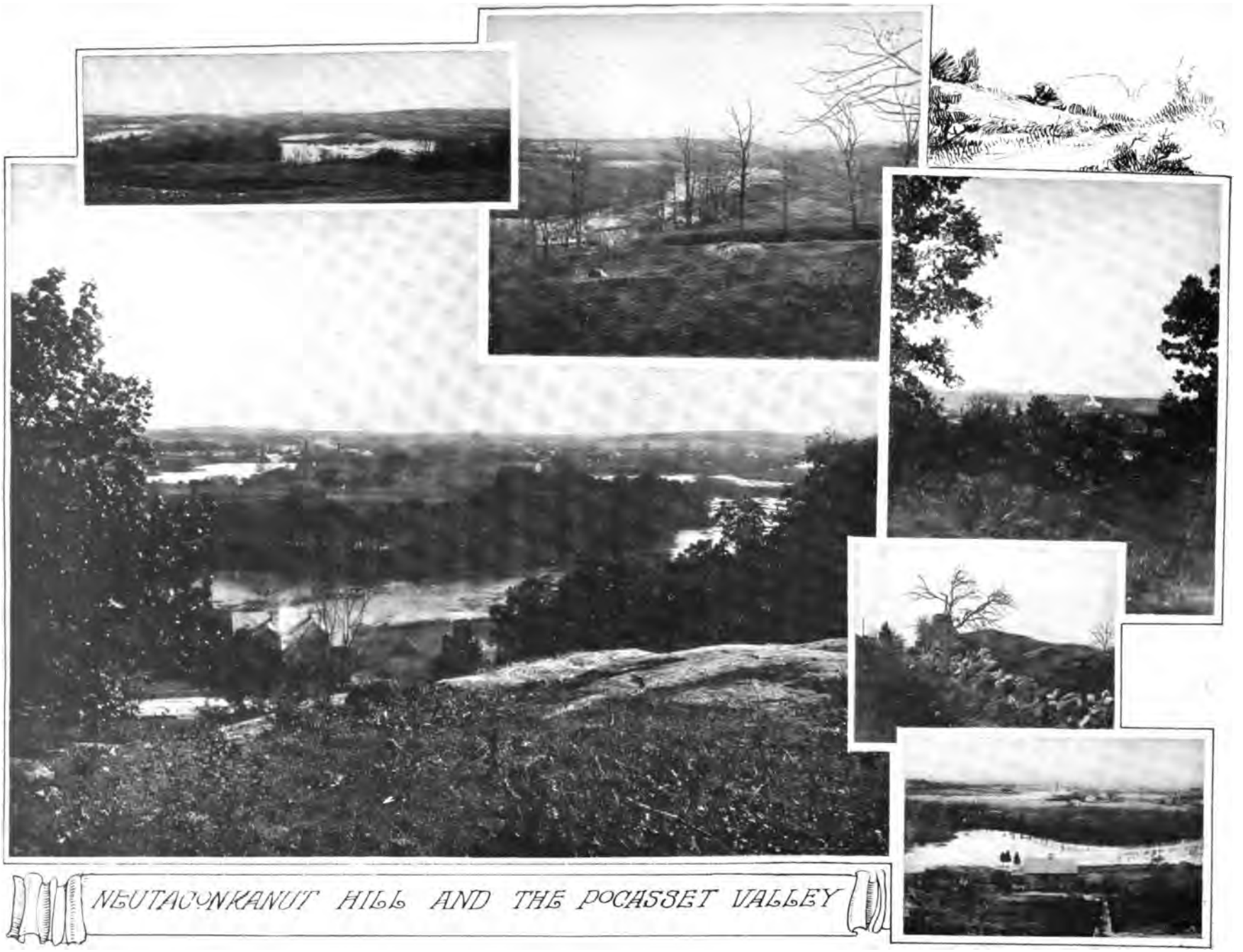

19. From the southern summit, near the great boulder, a magnificent view extends over the valleys of Cranston and Warwick, past Potowomut and through the west passage of Narragansett bay toward the sea. To the east is Fall River on its distant hill, and nearer, the spires of Bristol and Warren. At our feet, in the foreground, the Pocasset river bending around Antashantuck Neck, encloses Dyer's nursery and Pocasset cemetery. Neutaconkanut hill has been an object of interest since the first settlement of the colony.

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20. Pocasset River Valley.

A picturesque valley that needs no beautifying, but merely preservation. Most of the land is unavailable for building and the river itself is unmanageable, without enormous expense, but the river banks will be occupied by stables and back yards unless they are made into park lands which will preserve their beauty as a public asset.

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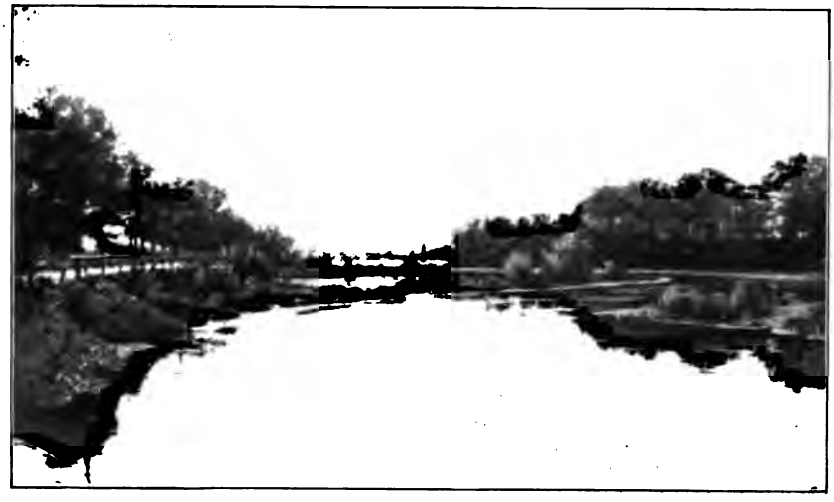


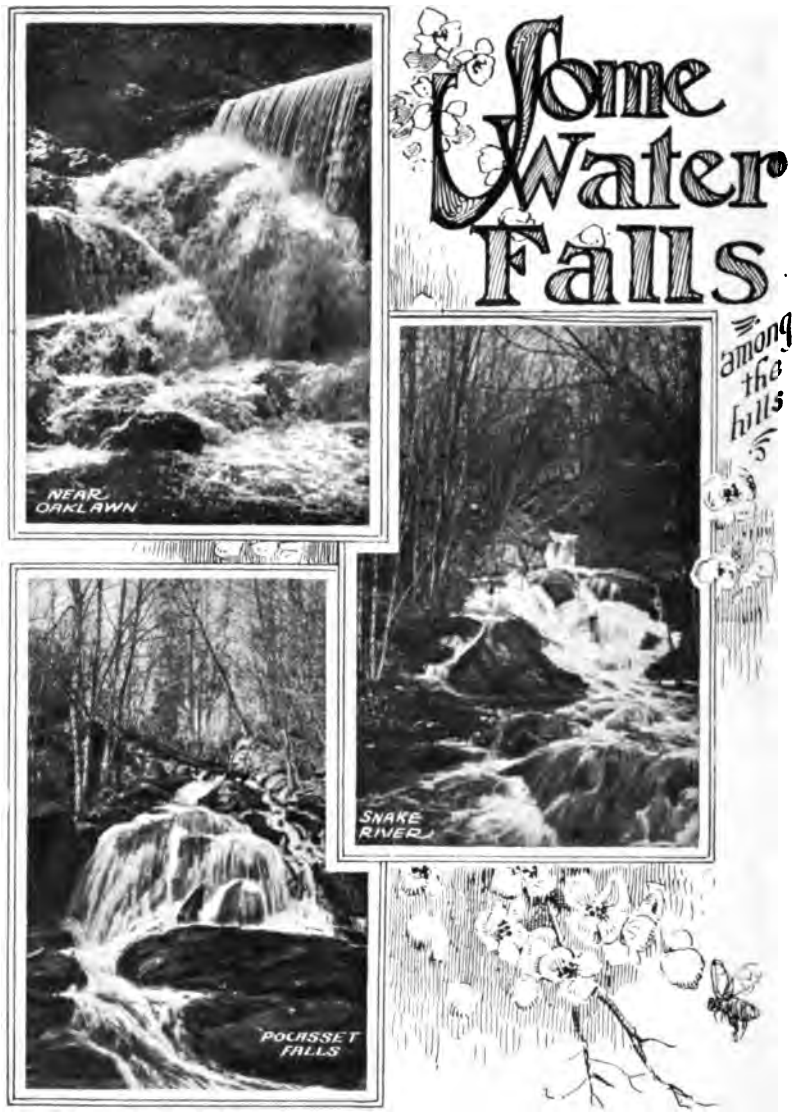
21. POCASSET RIVER AND PRINT WORKS POND, FROM DYER'S BRIDGE.

The natural flood channels must be kept free from obstructions. The ponds must be kept uncontaminated for their ice supply. The flow of the river must be unimpeded, since it furnishes water power to important industries and the stream must be kept clean, since it flows for miles through a district destined to be thickly populated. How could these purposes be more easily and cheaply accomplished than to make the river valley into a park?

NEUTACONKANUT HILL, AND THE POCASSET VALLEY.

The combination of "Ye Greate Hill of Notaquonchanet on the North-West," as it is called in the original deed of Providence Plantations, which the Indians gave to Roger Williams, with the broad marshy valley of the Pocasset river, is beautiful and striking. The rugged southern summit of the hill looks down upon many winding channels and glistening lakes, and almost enclosed by these is Antashantuck Neck covered with the rich cultivation of Dyer's Nursery and the Pocasset Cemetery.

The river spreads over an extensive area in the springtime, and it is difficult to imagine any use to which the lowlands could be put other than that of a park. To confine the river between costly walls and to reclaim these lowlands would destroy a landscape of surpassing loveliness, and the expense would be enormous. As for the hill, it would be poor economy for the city to allow anyone to build houses there, because the difficulty of laying out streets and perhaps viaducts, and providing the ordinary utilities that residents have a right to demand, like sewers and water supply, would far exceed any possible value that the property could have for taxation. So here is an exquisite park all made, except for a few bridges and a few roads, and it is at the very doors of a large population.



22. Some Waterfalls Among the Hills.

Among the steep hills that guard the metropolitan district on the west are a number of swift streams and a number of beautiful waterfalls that are but little known. Among these are the Pocasset Falls, the Snake River cascades, and several cascades west of Meshanticut and Oaklawn.

23. Between Cranston Print Works and the Elmwood district is Spectacle pond, the beautiful "Lake of Isles." The recreation value of this lake, with its beautiful isles, will be evident to anyone who may visit it on a pleasant Sunday in summer, for it is much used and enjoyed by the dwellers in the neighborhood.

Just up the channel, shown in the moonlight picture, members of the Metropolitan Park Commission not long ago discovered a most foul contamination of the waters, where an

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WINTER & SUMMER
SCENES AT
MASHAPAUG POND

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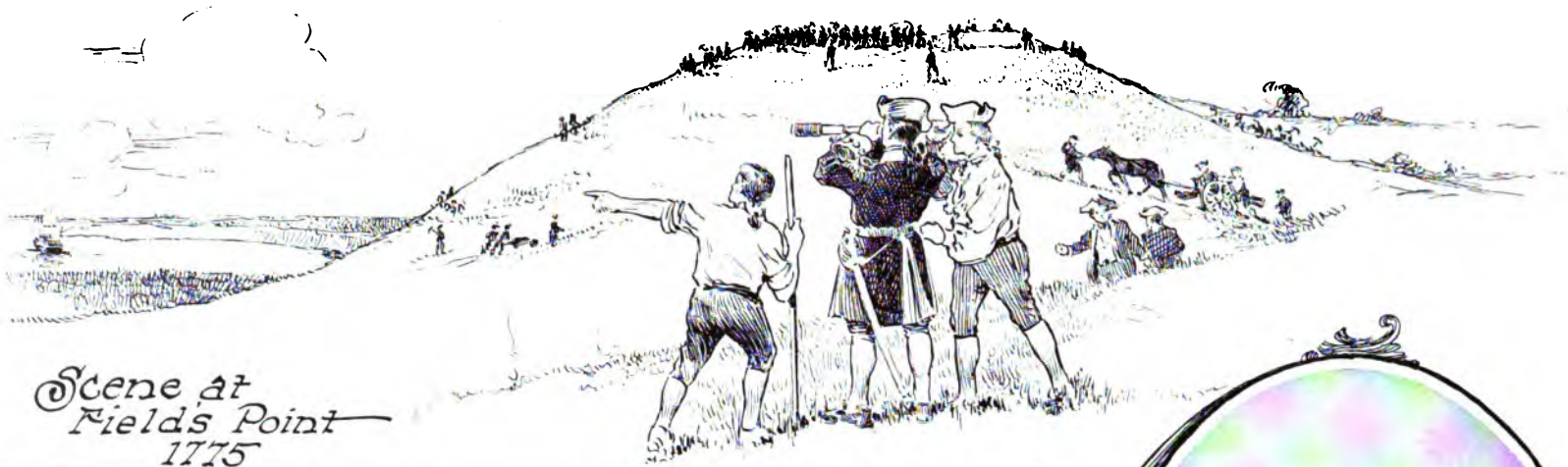
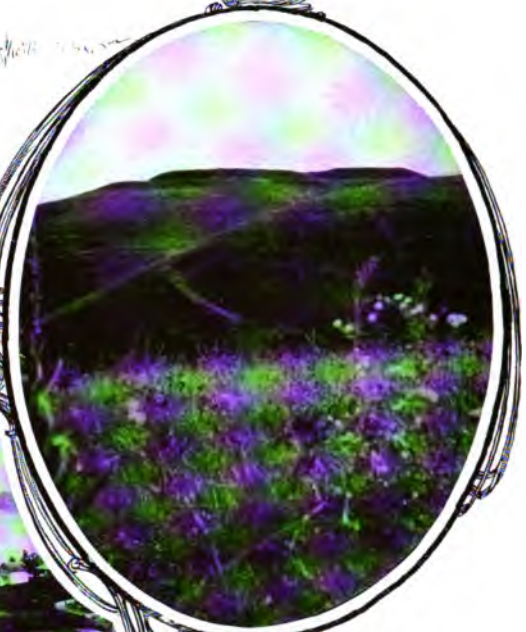


Scene at Fields Point 1775

Fields Point in 1905



Shortly after the Battle of Bunker Hill, when British ships threatened an attack on Providence, the people in town meeting assembled ordered intrenchments "hove up" between Fields Point and Sassafras Point, appointing Captain Nicholas Power to superintend the construction. Minute men were enlisted; fire rafts prepared; a boom and chain stretched across the river to Kettle Point, and a beacon was erected on Prospect Hill where one had been erected more than a century before to alarm the surrounding country in case of an invasion.

In October the British fleet again caused consternation. Under leadership of a special committee, the townspeople of every trade and profession proceeded to fortify "the hill to the south of the house of William Field." Thus Fort Independence was constructed. It is 110 feet long by 60 feet wide.

The British fleet after besieging Newport bombarded Bristol on October 7th, 1775, but were evidently kept from Providence by the warlike preparations.

During the second war with Great Britain the hills of Fields Point again became the scene of much activity.

Fields Point and Fort Independence

25. Fields Point in 1775 and in 1905.

Upon the whole shore of Narragansett Bay, north of Quonset camp ground, there is no reservation that the people may call their own, except at Fields Point, which belongs to the city of Providence.

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26. SOUTH FROM INGRAHAMVILLE POINT.

Now that the city of Providence has extended Blackstone Park to the southern boundaries of Butler Hospital, we may consider the long contemplated "River Road" along the west shore of the Seekonk as one of the probabilities of the near future. When it is completed it will make the finest drive that has been created since the building of the boulevard around the lakes of Roger Williams Park. There certainly should be another drive or promenade along the eastern shore from Red bridge as far as Ingrahamville Point.

From this eastern shore the broad river and the bold, heavily-wooded promontories of the opposite side—now happily preserved for permanent beauty—present a panorama of exquisite attraction.

A narrow reservation along the East Providence shore is needed to complete the picture and create a water park surpassed by few in America, and equalled by none that exist so close to a great population. Of course, the aspect of the shores at the Phillipsdale Mills should be improved by some foliage and trees, and there are a few other scars that mar the landscape, but the great lake-like basin has retained its beauty wonderfully well considering the opportunities that man has had to destroy it.

27. THE SEEKONK AT RED BRIDGE. A CHARACTERISTIC AMERICAN WATERFRONT.

This is far from being the most unlovely scene upon our waterfront, and Providence is no worse than most American cities in this regard. Foreign cities do not tolerate such river edges even in their busiest places. Since we do, however, there is all the more need of acquiring and preserving those other parts of the waterfront which are not especially useful for business purposes.

28. THE SEEKONK RIVER AND BLACKSTONE PARK.

From East Providence Shore, near Red Bridge, looking North.

The shores of the upper basin, between Red bridge and Pawtucket gas works, being of little commercial value, need never become ugly, like the portion south of Red bridge. The greater part of the western shore is already reserved by Blackstone Park and Butler Hospital and the large cemeteries. The eastern edge should be reserved.

29. THE SEEKONK RIVER ROAD AT SWAN POINT CEMETERY.

Such a road as this should border the upper Basin of the Seekonk on both sides from Red Bridge to Pawtucket

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30. THE SEEKONK RIVER. UPPER BASIN.

A very narrow strip of land along the eastern shore is needed to complete this superb water park. Why wait until all the trees are cut down? and since a river road is intended along the western shore, why not build it now? The present generation might like to use some of these things.

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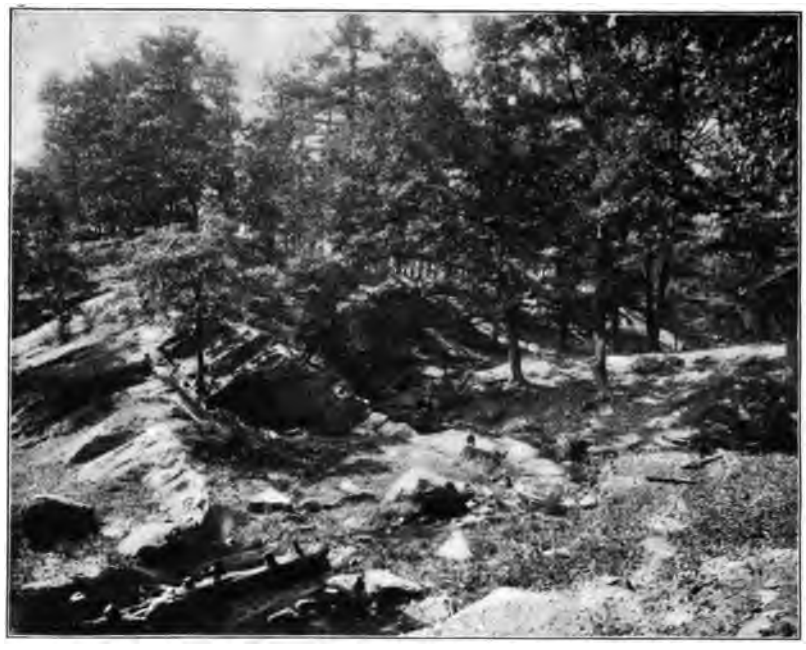


31. THE GREAT LEDGE AND THE BROOK,—PLEASANT VALLEY.

Just north of Davis Park, between Chalkstone avenue and Smith street, a little brook comes tumbling around the end of a gigantic rock in a valley exquisite in picturesque attractiveness. It is but one mile from the State House.

ON THE NORTHERN CIRCUIT.

Pleasant Valley Parkway

The northwest section of Providence has more unoccupied and "undeveloped" land than can be found in any other direction within equal distance of the City Hall. This is primarily due to the lack of pleasant approaches. (See page 76).

The most essential connecting link in the whole system of parkways proposed has recently been ordered by the city council of Providence. The plan of the new Pleasant Valley Parkway, as far as it goes, is strictly in accord with the wishes and recommendations of the Public Park Association and the suggestions of this Commission.

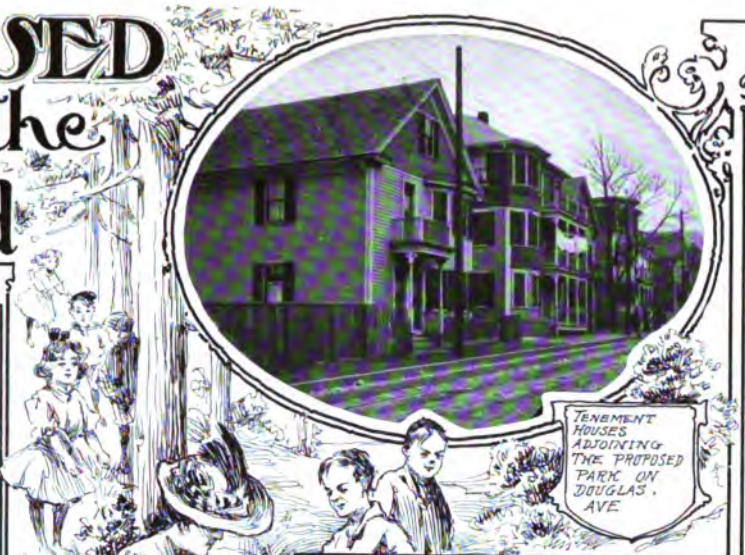
The connection is to be made across the present unsightly dumping grounds north of Promenade street, to Davis Park, and the street along the east side of that park will be boulevarded. From Chalkstone avenue the parkway will follow the course of the brook, through the exquisite glen of Pleasant Valley and along by the Elmhurst estate, to Academy avenue. It is intended to continue the boulevard onward to the State Home and School grounds, and from there in a very direct northwesterly course to the city's domain at Fruit Hill reservoir.

The natural easy grade of this thoroughfare and the many attractions along the way, as well as its directness, will make it a very popular drive and give value to so many hundred acres of splendid residence sites that the city treasury will doubtless be speedily reimbursed. From some point near the State Home and School one branch of the boulevard system should extend south along the edge of the high land crossing Chalkstone avenue and Manton avenue and reaching the Woonasquatucket river near the new Merino avenue bridge. This will give access to Neutaconkanut hill and the rest of the "southern circuit." The other branch, turning north, brings us to Fruit Hill

32. THE WENSCOTT RESERVOIR. FROM HERE THE WEST RIVER FLOWS THROUGH THE WANSKUCK DISTRICT.

A Proposed Park for the North End

PATHWAY ALONG A GRASSY SLOPE



TENEMENT HOUSES ADJOINING THE PROPOSED PARK ON DOUGLAS AVE

A DRIVE THROUGH THE PINES

BROOK THROUGH THE PROPOSED PARK

33. Corliss or West River Park.

Between Eagle Park (which is not a park at all) and Wanskuck,—extending from Douglas avenue to the West river, there is a beautiful tract of very rolling land, with a steep little hill that looks down into a deep valley, through which flows a winding stream. There are two attractive ponds and some fine woods, although congested districts full of small tenements are closing in all around. The people of the tenements need the refreshment of this fine estate. There is a chance for boating upon the ponds and ball playing upon the field nearby. This is the Third Ward's great park necessity.

"The unrestrained hand of vandalism is fast destroying the natural beauty. For more than thirty years mothers have brought their fretful and weary little ones into these leafy glades. From the restraint of the school room and peril of the city streets urchins have flocked here for childish pleasure and young and old have wandered through the winding paths after a day's labor for a breath of God's free air.

The property was bought by the late George H. Corliss about thirty years ago. Mr. Corliss appointed a caretaker to protect the trees and shrubs from mischief makers, and a squad of workmen kept the grounds in good condition. During most of the years of his ownership the public was allowed free use and enjoyment of the land."—*Prov. Sunday Journal.*

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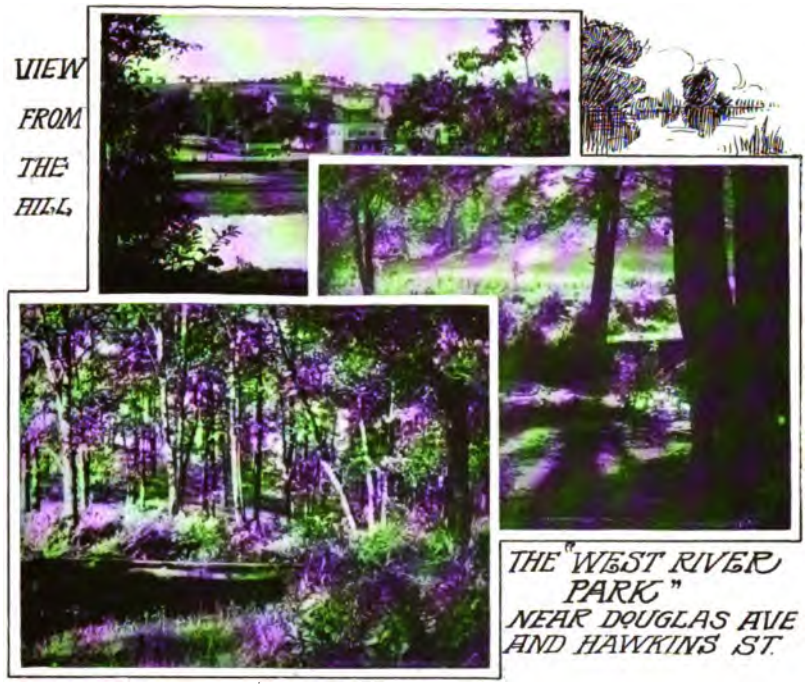

34. The tract of land bordered by Douglas avenue, Hawkins street, and the West river, is so undulating that its value for building is very small, though its value as a park is large.

reservoir. From here a continuation is planned through North Providence to reach the Wenscott reservoir and beyond that along the edge of the high hills to Olney's pond and the Lincoln woods. The land in this section is so little built upon that it is possible to consider a variety of routes, and the exact layout of the parkways will naturally depend much upon the liberality and foresight of the owners of undeveloped lands.

From Pleasant Valley another drive has been suggested, leading across Smith street and Eaton street to Bradley Hill (from Davis Park to the Seekonk river). The fine old Bradley estate has often been suggested for a park, but has recently been bequeathed for another very useful public purpose. Down over the hill beyond Admiral street and Douglas avenue is the proposed Corliss, or West River Park. The series of cross-town connections should extend via Leonard's pond across the Consolidated railroad, near Branch avenue, and then along Smithfield avenue beside the Moshassuck river (see illustration No. 6) to the North Burial Ground. North of the cemetery the Moshas-

suck river flows partly in its original bed and partly in the channel of the abandoned Blackstone Canal. The valley is pestilential and mosquito breeding from the contamination of the stream and the neglect of proper drainage improvements, and should all be made into a public reservation. (See Mr. Olmsted's article, page 26, and illustrations 4 and 5.)

35. FROM THE BALL GROUND, BESIDE LEONARD'S POND, LOOKING SOUTH.

OLNEYS POND

36. West and north of the Stump Hill reservoir is an immense wild tract full of rocks and forests and the most exquisite gem of a lake,—Olney's pond is its prosaic name.

Olney's pond is but four miles north of the State House and two and a half west of the Pawtucket railroad station. It is well worth a pilgrimage to look upon its rocky, forest-covered shores and its tranquil waters, undisturbed by turmoil of busy cities so near, but all unseen.

Here in the Lincoln Woods, is the place for a forest reservation like the Middlesex Fells, and it should extend from the Pawtucket reservoir to Quinsnicket.

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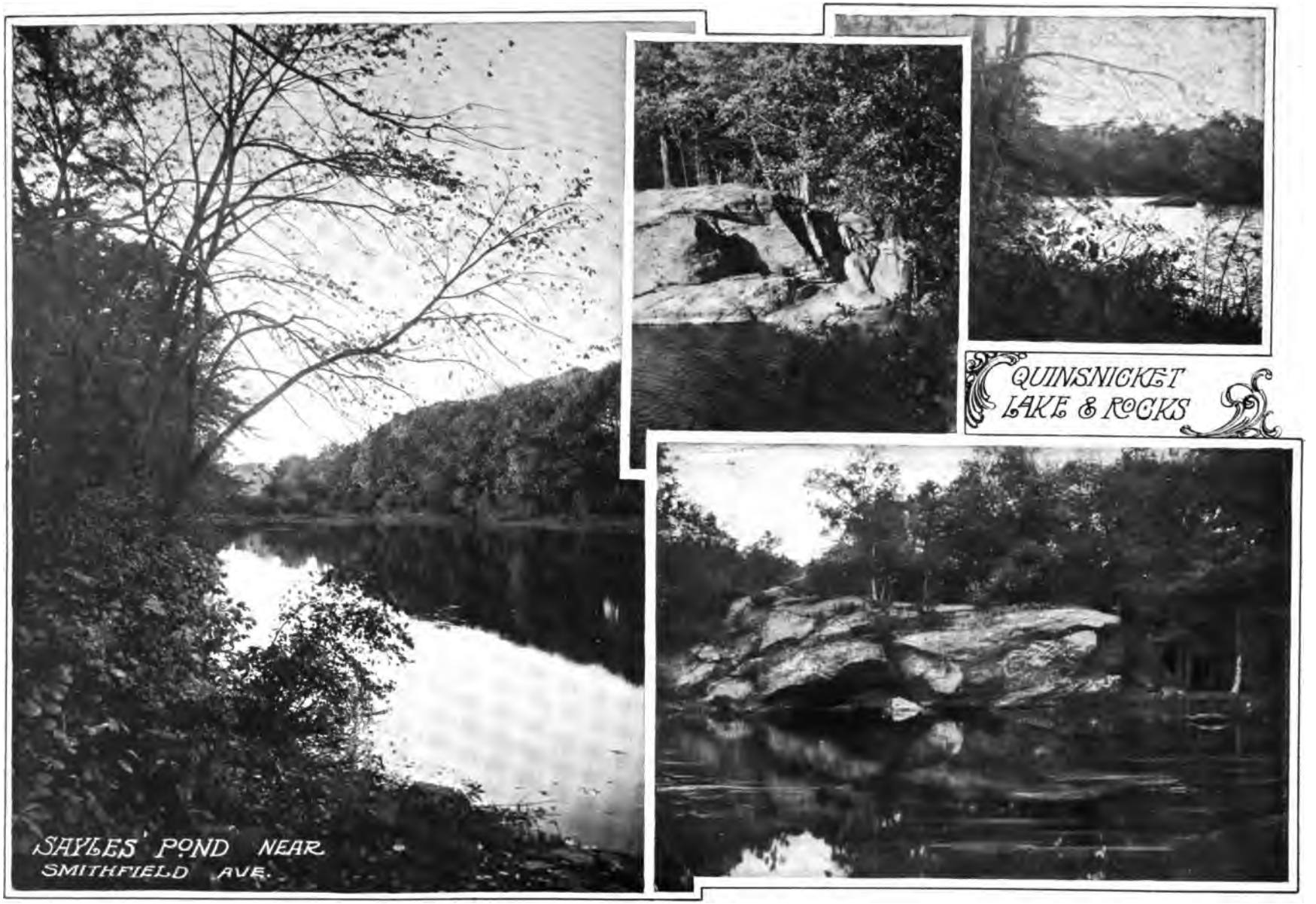

37. The tiny little lake, the massive rocks, and the deep wild gorge of Quinsnicket are well known to picnickers and to lovers of nature as among the most picturesque places in Rhode Island. They are near the northern extremity of the Lincoln woods.

Along the eastern base of Stump Hill, Smithfield avenue crosses and recrosses the Moshassuck river. There is a succession of lovely ponds and waterfalls and fine old colonial mansions. Quaint Butterfly factory is not far away, and the original of the Rhode Island building for the St. Louis Fair is just up the road.

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38. A West Side Park. Pawtucket.

An attractive possession of the city of Pawtucket, between St. Francis' cemetery and Grotto avenue. The offensive pollution of the Mosshassuck river, which flows along its boundary edge, destroys an otherwise delightful feature.

PAWTUCKET, CENTRAL FALLS, AND VALLEY FALLS.

The future attractiveness of Pawtucket and Central Falls as places of residence depends very largely upon the carrying out of a metropolitan park system. Their development is intimately concerned with the treatment of their rivers. The Blackstone river, which bisects the district north of the Providence line, the Ten Mile river on the east, and the Moshassuck river on the west may be made features of character and attraction, or of scorn and disgust. The Moshassuck is already in the latter class, though the Ten Mile river is everywhere beautiful. Overlooking the Moshassuck valley for a long distance are high bluffs that should have boundary roads along their upper edges. The valley and the side hills should be devoted largely to park purposes. The edges of the Blackstone may even yet, except where there are factories, be bordered from Valley Falls pond to Main street bridge with narrow promenades and walks and trees, as is universal with rivers in foreign cities. The views from the bridges ought to be very fine.

Pawtucket, Central Falls, and a part of Valley Falls are quite as thickly built as any part of Providence. Some of the most alluring of their park possibilities are in Lincoln, and therefore call for metropolitan rather than purely local action.

39. Scott's Pond, from Lonsdale Avenue. Looking through "The Narrows."

Scott's pond is celebrated for its beauty and for its floating island. Its shores, all, or nearly all, belong to a big mill corporation and are jealously kept from disfigurement, in order that the beautiful lake and parkland may give comfort to employees and add efficiency to labor.

40. VALLEY FALLS POND AND BLACKSTONE FLATS.

Steep wooded bluffs look far down upon wide stretching lagoons and the bright green meadows of the valley of the Blackstone. Here the valley is nearly a mile wide, and, as almost the whole expanse is at times covered by water, its value is little for any other purpose than that which it already so admirably serves. Hundreds of people may often be seen, on pleasant Sunday afternoons, strolling about the shore and rowing and fishing upon the placid waters

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41. THE TEN MILE RIVER. A JOB FOR THE RIVER AND HARBOR COMMITTEE.

THE TEN MILE RIVER.

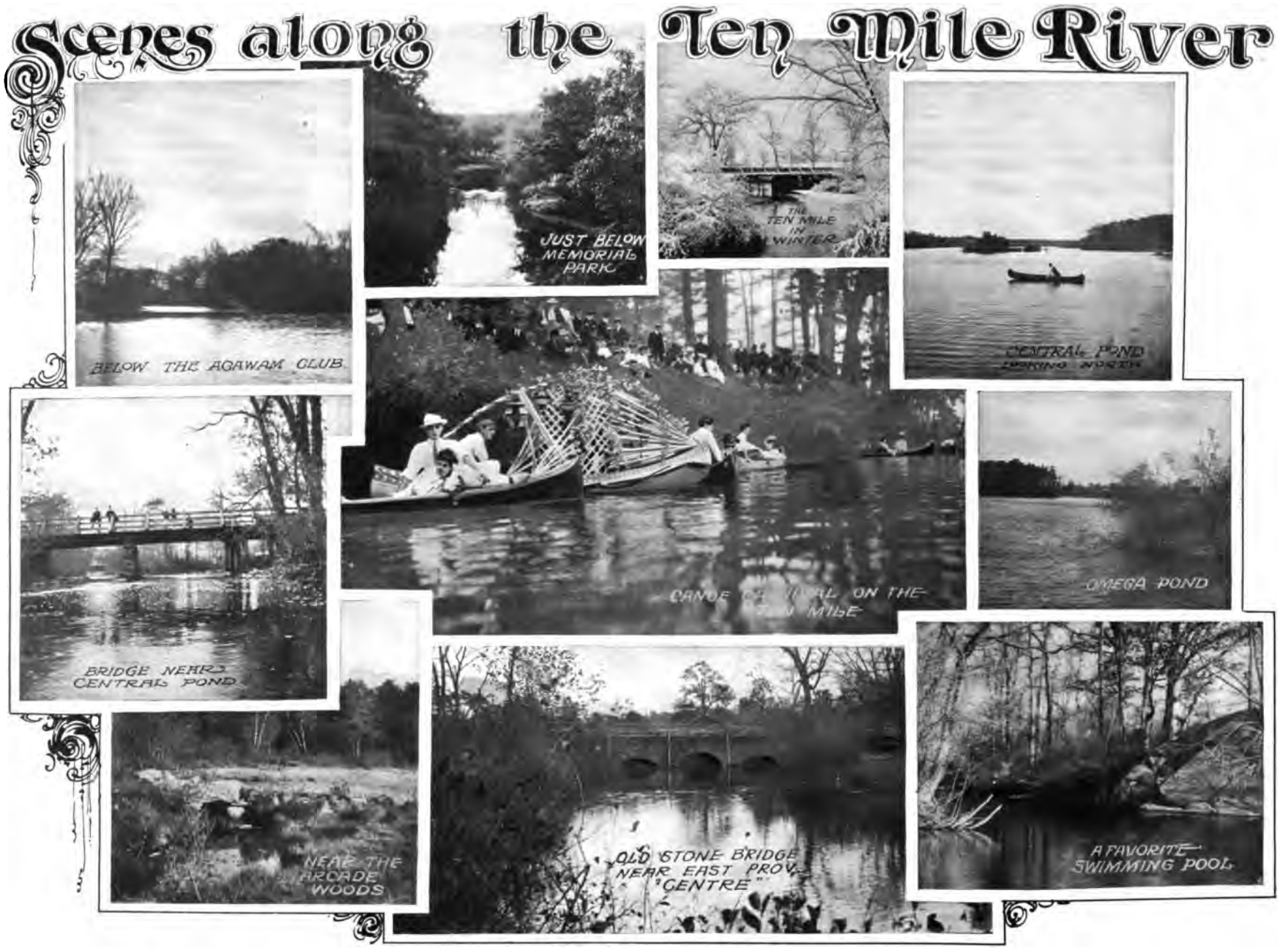
Since canoeing became popular the Ten Mile river has been getting better known and appreciated. The varied landscape; the peculiarly rich and luxuriant foliage along its banks, its overarching trees and broad bordering meadows make it everywhere an object of exquisite delight. Formerly it was the boundary line between Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Now Rhode Island owns a narrow strip on the eastern side, and its control as part of a metropolitan park system is simplified. As in the case of the Pawtuxet, the water supply of a large community requires that the shores be properly controlled.

The beauties of the romantic glen of Hunt's Mills and the deep recesses of the majestic Arcade woods are enjoyed by many voyagers who nowadays may take their choice of several different trolley lines to reach the river, and may hire canoes at various places along the banks.

42. THE TEN MILE RIVER VALLEY, JUST ABOVE MEMORIAL PARK. A SITE FOR A BEAUTIFUL LAKE.

Memorial Park needs a larger lake, and the whole Ten Mile river valley should become a public reservation. The valley is so flat that a little inexpensive dam at the Brook street bridge would make a lake extending back more than a mile and a quarter. It would be bordered by steep banks and contain several islands. Its general appearance may be realized whenever the river happens to be in flood.

43. THE TEN MILE VALLEY IN FLOOD TIME. HOW PART OF THE LAKE WOULD APPEAR.



44. The Ten Mile River and Some of its Uses.

Shall we allow it to become like the lower Moshsassuck; the great trees on its banks to be made into firewood; its wild flowers and its mossy banks but memories; and the stream itself—filth laden and repulsive—flowing behind cheap shanties, to serve as the sewage canal of all the valley?

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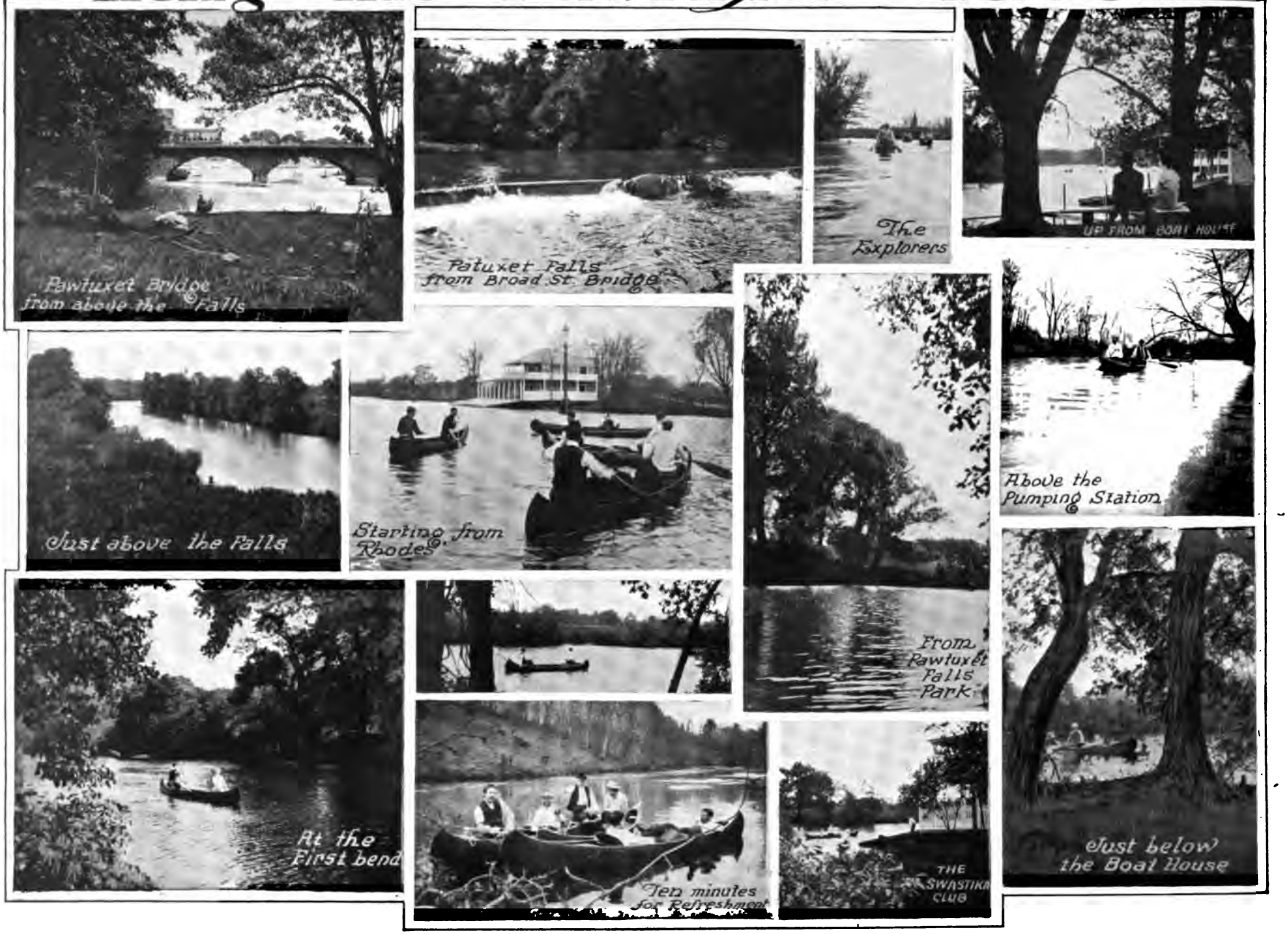
Along the Pawtuxet River



45. It is a superb river for boating, and along its shores the paths should lead continuously to afford possibilities for rambles through ways that are full of quiet delight. A reservation should be provided all the way from Pontiac, and along by the holdings of Providence at Pettaconsett and Sockanosset to the falls at Pawtuxet bridge, which, happily, are already owned by the city.

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THE PAWTUXET RIVER AND ITS VARIED DELIGHTS.

A Desirable Roadway.

From Pawtuxet to the neighborhood of the State institutions there is no drive, nor even a path, except by going many miles out of the way. There is no connection from Broad street to Elmwood avenue, between Park avenue at the north, until you get nearly to Lincoln Park on the south, and there is no way of going from Elmwood avenue west, between Auburn and Pontiac. Evidently a drive parallel with the Pawtuxet river and not very far from the stream would be a great convenience as well as very useful in joining the dead ends of the platted streets that now run down from the established highways. Moreover, it would be an attractive and beautiful drive and serve to separate the residence property from the public reservation which should extend along the river.

A Popular Waterway.

In time the Pawtuxet river will come to be recognized as one of the most valuable assets of the metropolitan district. Already hundreds of small boats float upon its waters, and several very attractive club houses have been built near Pawtuxet. Thousands of people look forward each year with affectionate longing for the boating season to open, and hundreds of thousands more will come in later years to know the delights of the river. Above the Pettaconsett pumping station public control of the banks is necessary to protect the water supply of Providence from the pollution that would be caused either by bordering farms or by houses near the water's edge. And scarcely less necessary is it to preserve to coming generations a picture of wild river banks, with all the glory of nature's decoration of rocks and tangled shrubbery, and overhanging trees that make great leafy arches above the water. Along the lower river some cheap shanties have been built and the onslaught upon the beauty of the stream is well under way, but there is no land of any considerable value near the shores. The reservation proposed, with its bordering roadway, would properly develop a great amount of real estate, and the owners of land could well afford to contribute a strip of generous width for a parkway.

Protection for Water Supply.

In places the banks rise abruptly from the river. At other places the shores are covered with broad lakes in the springtime overflow, and the width of the reservation should be largely fixed by the point where the land begins to be of greater value for buildings than for a park; but the strip would generally take to the crest of the bordering bluffs, and where there are already obnoxious buildings in sight they should be screened out by foliage.

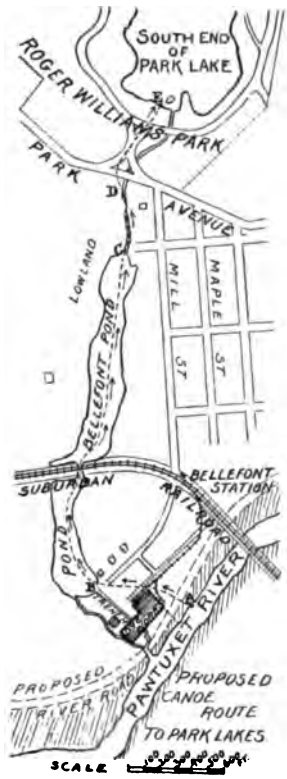
The scene upon the Charles river, where twenty-nine miles of shore are under the control of the Massachusetts Metropolitan Park Commission, is one of much brilliancy and gayety for at least eight months of the year. Between Waltham bridge and Newton Lower Falls, there are now estimated to be more than 5,000 canoes and small boats. There are dozens of clubs and public boat houses, and every precaution is taken to ensure safety and happiness of the throngs on the river. There is

probably no other boating scene comparable with it save that on the Thames between Oxford and London, where the river is also publicly controlled. The Pawtuxet undoubtedly offers similar possibilities.

Pawtuxet to Roger Williams Park.

In the report of the Metropolitan Park Commission for 1905, a suggestion was made of the possibility of a water connection between the Pawtuxet river and the lakes of Roger Williams Park, whereby boats could be conveniently navigated back and forth. Since that time the members of the Canoe Clubs on the river have become much interested in the project and their application for permission to enter the park has been granted by the Park Commissioners of Providence.

The following quotation is from a recent article in the Providence Journal.



"Canoeing on the Pawtuxet is now an established sport, and the approach of spring causes the voyager's thoughts to wander to its waters. It is but natural that the canoeists of this State should hope to possess some of the advantages that are so thoroughly enjoyed by the people of Boston and its suburbs on the beautiful Charles river.

"After a thorough survey it has been found thoroughly feasible to establish a water route from the lakes at Roger Williams Park to the Pawtuxet river and the benefits and pleasures to be derived from such a connection are at once apparent.

" 'The course from the Pawtuxet to the park lakes is almost all ready for use. The work of opening it will be as nothing compared to the advantages to be secured."

"From the point 'A' upon the river, as is shown by the map, to the pond at point 'B' is about 100 yards, and there are no obstructions. The pond is about one-third of a mile in length. From 'C' to 'D,' a distance of 100 yards or so, the stream is perfectly navigable, but it would be well to deepen it to provide against difficulty in dry weather. The water leaves the park lake near the point 'E' by means of the falls and flows under the stone bridge to Park avenue at the point 'D.' This carry would be about 200 feet. Several methods are feasible for making these two 'carries' easy.

"The park having been reached, think of the expanse of water open to the canoeist; think of those glorious lakes in the moonlit evenings of summer, echoing with the life and spirits of youth, as the graceful canoes glide upon the shining waters.

"All canoeists to whom the plan has been presented are enthusiastically in favor of its early accomplishment."

At some future time it may be thought desirable and practicable to construct a lock at either end of this waterway, by which passage may be given for launches and boats of all kinds from the Pawtuxet River to Roger Williams Park.

46. The waste land was reserved for a lake and park, to add beauty and value to all the surroundings.

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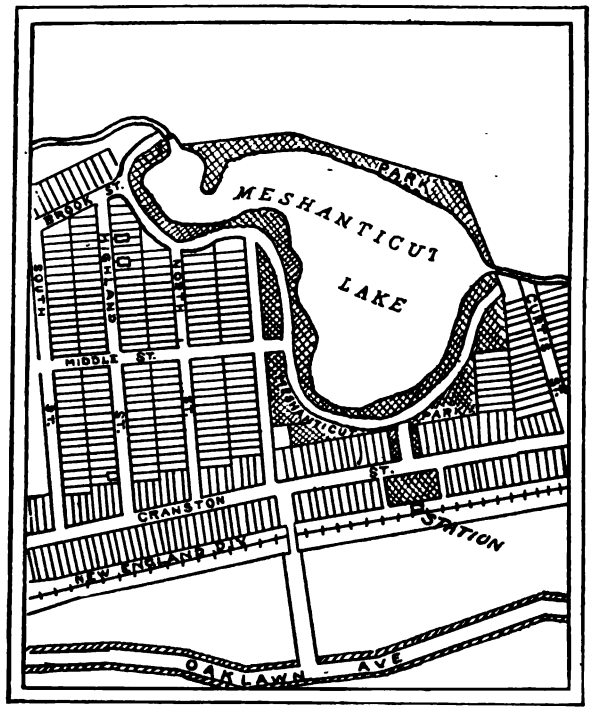
MESHANTICUT PARK AND LAKE.

AN OBJECT LESSON OF WIDE APPLICATION.

Little slum places are so numerous throughout the whole suburban area that it is hard to find any region of considerable size that is not afflicted with eyesores which prevent the district from being wholly attractive. Most plats are laid out with uncompromising right angles, regardless of hills and hollows and swamps. If the hollows are ever filled, it is by laborious process of rubbish dumping. The poorer lots are sold for anything they will bring, for the meanest purposes.

Meshanticut Park is a pleasing exception. There was once a swamp through which flowed a good sized brook, and it was bordered by steep hills. The owners built a little dam which created a beautiful lake. They laid out paths and made a roadway surrounding the lake, to fit the natural grade of the hillsides, and the portion between was set aside for a park. The land thus withdrawn from sale was worth little, but such purposes as it might otherwise have been used for would have greatly lessened the value of the rest of the tract. By making it into a beautiful park, it gave a character to the whole neighborhood such as is found in but very few suburban plats, and so Meshanticut, though one of the most distant, has been one of the most rapidly developing of them all. It is an object lesson that shows in a small way some of the benefits to be derived by the extension of such a policy in a large public way to all the swamps and steep hillsides of the metropolitan district.



PLAN NO. 9. NATURAL POSSIBILITIES WISELY UTILIZED IN DEVELOPING LAND FOR THE MARKET.

Through Meshanticut, Oaklawn avenue has been made into a boulevard by private enterprise. From this district there should be an attractive connection with the Pocasset valley and Neutaconkanut. There should also be a fine avenue curving up the western side of Sockanosset Hill to the future park around the reservoir.

Blackmore pond and its steep surrounding shores would make a veritable gem of a park. Like the many other ponds with which the metropolitan district is so exceptionally and beautifully provided, it is an object of much interest with or without further improvement; valuable for boating, skating, and as a great open air space; sure to become pestilential if building encroaches, but a very delightful object in its present condition A small section of the eastern shore has been set aside for public use.

47. Blackmore Pond. Cranston.

Since Auburn and the Eden Park district have been building up so rapidly on the west, Blackmore pond has come to be a place of much resort for numerous neighbors. It is about five minutes' walk from the new Cranston high school.

48. The Pocasset river flows along at the foot of Sockanosset hill through a more or less marshy valley that should be made into a parkway. It would not sacrifice any property that is of the slightest value, but would aid in the development of the adjoining plots.

49. From the old earthworks, still well defined, the view is full of life and activity, – of drawbridges and great power station chimneys, and coal pockets and railroad trains and swift moving steamers and lumbering barges.

THE NARRAGANSETT SHORES.

To gain any adequate idea of the varied beauties of the Narragansett Bay shores you must assume the role of a brazen and undaunted trespasser, undiscouraged by stone walls and wire fences, and ready to walk unblushingly by many inhospitable signs that testify obtrusively to private occupancy.

Of course you must walk, except when you have to climb, for nowhere is there a road running for any considerable distance anywhere near the shore.

The present roads all run down to a "dead end" at the water's edge. If you are driving or "motoring," you may travel down to the jumping off place and then come back to the point from which you started, and all the dwellers down near the end of the route appear amused to think you have mistaken your way. Even the cottagers themselves - most of them—have access to no more than that little fragment of shore that their own estates occupy, for everybody appears to be so much afraid that he will not have the exclusive enjoyment of his own tiny view that he jealously guards it against the intrusion of his neighbors.

ALONG NARRAGANSETT — The Upper Bay

50. The dwellers upon each headland seem to be trying to keep aloof from their neighbors, else there would long ago have been a continuous promenade on either side. The views are all of surpassing loveliness. The opportunity for superb drives, giving access to hundreds of summer cottages and to the permanent suburban settlements, would be hard to surpass.

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51. Looking up the Bay From Bluff Below Silver Spring.

Some vantage-points like these should be put under public control before they become entirely monopolized for the enjoyment of a few private citizens.

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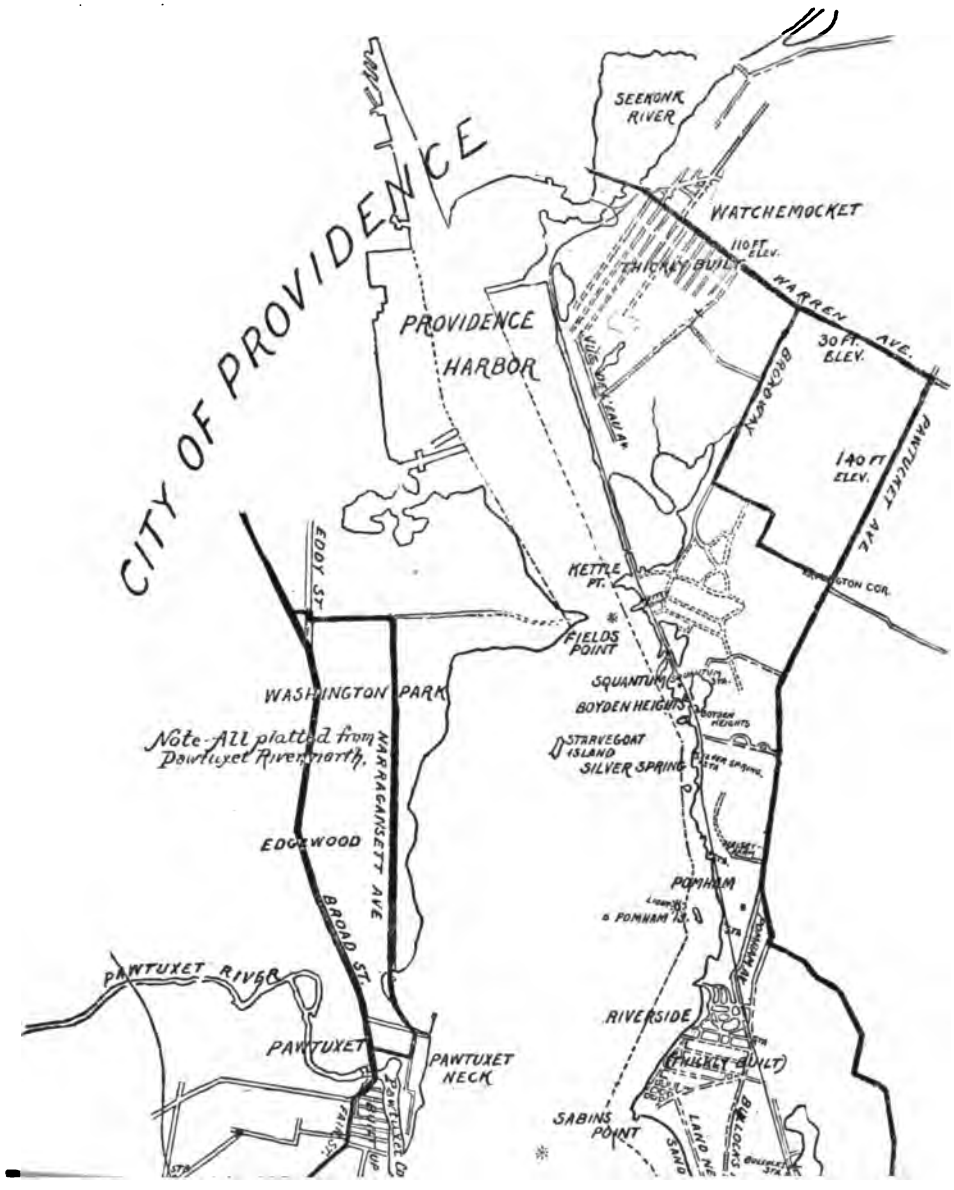
CITY OF PROVIDENCE
SEEKONK RIVER
WATCHEMOCKET
110 FT. ELEV.
THICKLY BUILT
WARREN AVE.
30 FT. ELEV.
PROVIDENCE HARBOR
BROADWAY
140 FT. ELEV.
PAWTUCKET AVE.
EDDY ST.
KETTLE PT.
FIELDS POINT
WASHINGTON PARK
SQUANTUM
BOYDEN HEIGHTS
Note-All platted from Pawtuxet River north.
STARVEGOAT ISLAND
SILVER SPRING
NARRAGANSETT AVE
EDGEWOOD
POMHAM
BROAD ST.
PAWTUXET RIVER
RIVERSIDE
PAWTUXET
PAWTUXET NECK
SABINS POINT

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THE EAST SHORE.

Proposed Barrington Boulevard.

The eastern shore is laid out in distinct settlements closely placed but differing in characteristics and population. One thing the people have in common. They all give allegiance to the city wherein they gain their daily bread either by toil or by cutting off coupons, and whether they go by automobile or by trolley car, or anything but the Bristol railroad, they must all travel around two sides of a big triangle when one side would serve them very much better.

The obvious course for a highway to Riverside and beyond is parallel with the shore at the top of the bluffs overlooking the Bristol and Fall River railroad. As it is now, however, we have to proceed inland over the long and tedious Taunton avenue hill, a mile and a half to the east, in order to find a road running southwest to the places on the shore. Beyond Riverside the road leading on to Barrington is almost as bad, for it contains many sharp angles by which it is unnecessarily lengthened.

Pawtucket avenue, by which the southeastern towns are reached, is one of the busiest highways in the State. For the most part it is not unattractive, and from some parts of it there are grand and far-reaching views. Yet it is far from the populous water front, and so pitifully narrow that the trolley company has been obliged to buy a private right of way and cut down many splendid trees in order to get room to put in a second track without entirely destroying the driveway upon which a multitude of vehicles are constantly passing.

As soon as you have crossed the big bridge into East Providence at Watchemoket square, you find First street starting off at a right angle to the south in just the way that would be most direct. But you can not drive very far on First street, for the rains have gullied it until it looks like a miniature reproduction of a western river canyon. It is possible, however, for you to scramble on foot along the edges, and thus arrive in the course of a few hundred feet behind the old fort.

Fort Hill.

The view from Fort Hill is always interesting, and when we have the glow of the setting sun, reflecting upon the still waters of the harbor and touching the great masses of smoke that roll from the tall chimneys, is combined with the sky line of the city and the ranges of distant hills, the scene takes on much beauty.

Behind the hill is Watchemoket—a district that is almost as crowded as any within the city limits. Nature made it beautiful but man has brought to it much ugliness.

Along the Bluffs.

Fort Hill terminates in a precipice where the railroad excavations have cut away its western side, and south of the hilltop a flat table land extends along a bluff some seventy feet above the tracks. By happy accident, a strip four or five hundred feet wide along the edge has remained unoccupied and still affords a fine playground and promenade for the people of the tenement districts just beyond. For perhaps half a mile it is barren of trees. Beyond, it is prettily

52. THE SQUANTUM CLUB AND NEARBY SHORES.

Above Riverside the shore is rocky and lined with many picturesque little islands, and jutting peninsulas that look as if they had been started for islands.

wooded with cedars, and the steep sandy precipice gives place to a rounded bluff. So near is it to the homes of many people, and even to the centre of the city, that its usefulness for park land is very apparent. Down through the Lyon farm runs a beautiful grassy lane with great trees arching overhead, which the map calls Vue de l'Eau avenue. If you have the effrontery to climb over the gates, you will find the way extending down to a long peninsula that nearly bisects Watchemoket Cove.

Acoss Watchemoket Cove.

Here the boulevard should cross by a little bridge or causeway. The natural grade leading up from the cove on either side is well adapted for a useful thoroughfare that should be prolonged behind Kettle Point and Squantum, and Boyden Heights and Silver Spring, until it enters the present highway in the rear of the Pomham Club where Pomham avenue and Bullocks Point avenue diverge.

Behind Kettle Point.

The hillsides behind Kettle Point are particularly beautiful, and long ago were platted in a park-like way by that eminent landscape architect, Horace Cleveland. The only obstacle to our progress here is a sign beside a cottage that bids us "beware of the dog." Everybody on this east shore appears to own at least one dog, and for the most part these are serious looking dogs who scrutinize you with suspicion while you try to maintain a guileless and innocent demeanor. In spite of the warning, the dogs in this particular place, however, appear to be the most affable and gentlemanly of all the canine tribe, and greet the wayfarer most hospitably. Beyond Kettle Point a path leads to a barbed wire fence and the beautiful grove behind the Squantum Club. Farther toward the south there is another entanglement to be surmounted before you reach Boyden Heights.

Boyden Heights to Pomham.

The explorer proceeds behind the great merry-go round along the route he thinks the boulevard should take—midway between the rocky shore and the main road on top of the hill—and finds a string of summer settlements stretching for many miles. There is Vue de l'Eau, and

53. BLUFF AT CAMP WHITE LOOKING TOWARD CRESCENT PARK

South of Sabin's Point, the water begins to look like the real article, adapted for bathing purposes. Part of this long stretch of sand should be under public control.

Silver Spring with its pretty little cottages packed closely along the edge over the water. Then there is the Halsey farm and Hauterive and the grounds of the old Union Club, all scattered over with tiny houses prettily placed, and the imposing buildings of the Pomham Club. Separate roads lead down to all the different groups.

Riverside to Crescent Park.

Riverside, built upon a sandy promontory, is a curious little thicket of toy buildings and narrow twisted streets, which since the advent of the trolley has been coming more and more into use for winter residence. The houses on the very edge of the bluff have their backyards consisting largely of steps and bathing houses. It is all a long peninsula from Sabin's Point south, with Bullocks Cove lying over behind. From this main thoroughfare a long succession of ragged little streets straggle out toward the bay, and summer houses with fantastic or facetious names, are closely crowded. A few lots where buildings are lacking are well occupied by tents in the summer. A local improvement society might find plenty of work to keep its members busy, for there is much that is unkempt and shabby along the way to Crescent Park.

Crescent Park extends across the peninsula midway of its length. A veritable "midway" it is, too, with all the typical shore resort attractions. The steamers and the trolley cars bring throngs to eat the clam dinners that are served in the long whitewashed sheds; to shoot the chutes and loop the loops, and coast in roller cars, and to listen to the persuasive voices of the lecturers in front of the canvas covered theatres and mammoth merry-go-rounds whose mournful music grinds as long as the engine runs.

Narragansett Terrace.

South of Crescent Park a charming grove separates the excursion resort from the quiet and pretty Narragansett Terrace which extends south to the end of the peninsula.

Upon the bay side of the meandering avenue is a long line of pretty cottages with wide and well-kept yards in front, and a terrace in the rear looking down upon a narrow strip of beach on which many boats are drawn up. This is the extremity of East Providence, and across the cove, just in the rear, is the Barrington shore with Drownville and Nayatt not far away.

54. The bluff south of Sabins Point rises steeply above the water and runs in a long shallow crescent to Bullocks Point. For a portion of the distance through Camp White the water front has been recognized in the provision of a modest little esplanade. There is a terrace shaded by many trees, and here and there a seat overlooking a tolerably good bathing beach.

WATCHEMOCKET COVE

LOOKING ACROSS THE HARBOR MOUTH TOWARD SASSAFRAS POINT

Midway of the cove where it is narrow are the fragments of the old dike that was built by a hopeful speculator to operate a tide mill. The mill is gone and the dike is in ruins and so you must walk around by the railroad embankment that separates this cove from the harbor, or by a longer detour via South Broadway.

The old tide mill site itself has been a place of interesting episodes and it is painfully remembered by numerous victims as the scene of successful activity by that enterprising young clergyman, Mr. Jernegan, a few years ago, in his project for extracting gold from sea water. As a separater of gold from its abiding place, so resourceful was he, that when the muddy fluid of Watchemoket cove failed to pan out as was fondly dreamed, he yet managed to extract an extraordinary supply of it from the pockets of interested spectators before he departed for parts unknown.

WATCHEMOCKET COVE
"Where salt water was turned into Gold"

LOOKING OUT FROM SO. BROADWAY

55. Watchemoket cove and its shores would make a beautiful park, especially if a dam were built at the narrow outlet to maintain the water level and cover the mud flats which are now bare at low tide.

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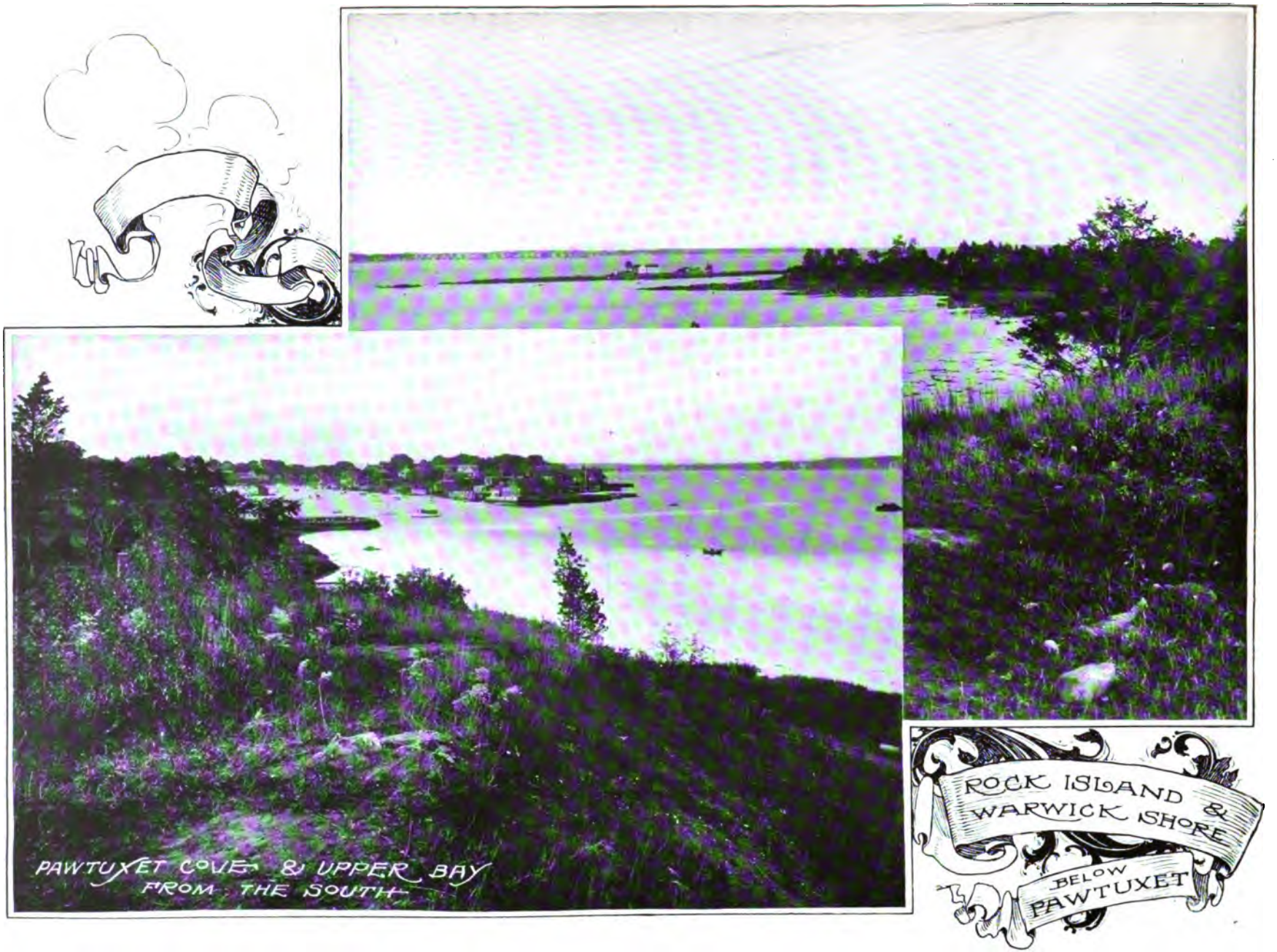

56. The Shores Below Pawtuxet.

In the summer time there are multitudes of tents holding happy families living a life of evident fascination under the trees and along the sands, and hundreds of boats of every size and sort are ever flitting joyously upon the sparkling waters of the bay. These views, however, were taken October 15, 1905, after the shores had become comparatively deserted.

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57. CONIMICUT POINT AND THE UPPER BAY, FROM THE CHUTES AT ROCKY POINT

WEST SHORE BOULEVARD.

A few connecting links here and there, and two or three bridges across shallow coves that extend far inland, would furnish the opportunity for such a drive along the west shore as has long been needed. Shore reservations should be established upon the water side of this boulevard near Rock Island and at Gaspee Point. There ought also to be another reservation between Conimicut and Rocky Point.

The main highway to Warwick Neck and Rocky Point is now far inland. Although most of the shore is well settled for many miles below the city, the streets upon the different plats seldom connect. Sometimes only the width of a wall stands in the way, for it is a pleasant fashion of plat developers to leave out a strip of land a single foot in width at the ends of their cross streets, merely to make the fellow who owns the next plat give up good money in order to contain a continuous thoroughfare. But the other man seldom accedes to the demand. He sells off all the lots he has along the shore, and a few others to people who do not realize that when houses are built along the water front they will be cut off from all promenade by the bay side which they expected to enjoy, and then the rest of the plat usually goes begging for customers. It is a very selfish arrangement, and even the holders of the limited number of shore lots do not profit by it in the long run, for instead of a long promenade by the waters' edge, which by right there should be, they have only their own little section bounded by a fence or a wall on either hand.

Upon the west shore, however, owing perhaps to the long coves that make inland and the inaccessibility by existing highways, there are two large tracts of land that still

58. From the "Chutes" at Rocky Point. Looking Southeast.

remain almost wholly unoccupied and offer chance for splendid waterside parks. A mile or so below Pawtuxet bridge we come to the beautiful rolling fields and the ancient garden opposite Rock Island, known as the Country Club grounds, and just across Passconquis cove is Gaspee Point, famous in American history.

Where the Gaspee was Burned.

Although Esek Hopkins was the first Commander-in-chief of an American fleet of war, Captain Whipple, also of Providence, organized the first armed expedition against a naval vessel of the enemy, on that famous night in 1772, when his hastily mustered followers in their long boats, pulled silently down the river to destroy the Gaspee.

The large reward offered by the British government failed to bring forth evidence against any one connected with the affair. Apparently no one in Providence had even heard of it. The English commander, however, made a shrewd surmise as to the leadership, and wrote a letter thus:—

"You, Abraham Whipple, on the 10th of June, 1772, burned His Majesty's vessel, the Gaspee, and I will hang you at the yard arm." Back came the polite reply:— "Sir James Wallace,—Always catch a man before you hang him. Your obedient servant, Abraham Whipple."

The shore below the Country Club, beautifully wooded and grandly adapted for a public reservation, might be made very accessible by a short extension of the Broad street trolley line, and Gaspee Point would not be far away if a bridge were built, though in its absence we must walk nearly three miles around the head of the cove.

Gaspee Point offers unrivalled opportunities for a public bathing place and bayside park, as the summer time campers can testify. It is at present a long drive over sandy lanes from the main highway. One pleasant summer Sunday in 1905 when the secretary visited it, Probation Officer Wallace was demonstrating its value in a practical

59. FROM THE "CHUTES" AT ROCKY POINT. LOOKING SOUTHWEST.

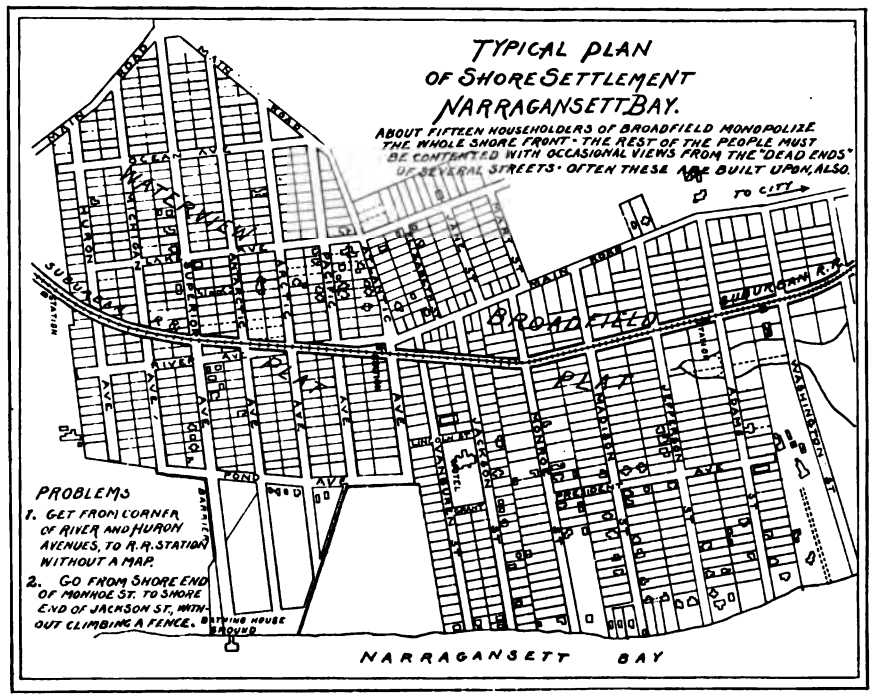
way, with fifty of his youthful charges emancipated from the crowded streets and from lives of crime and disgrace, making merry upon the sands. "Officer Wallace certainly had the right idea. To save them from growing up criminals, instead of confining them within the walls of a State 'reformatory' he takes them into the open. The long white expanse of the point was merry with the laughter of urchins playing ball, or tumbling about in the shallow waters. It was well that this place upon the bay was still left for their free enjoyment. In every other direction, save only upon this particular stretch of shore, the borders of the bay seemed solidly lined by continuous chains of summer houses and private establishments."

Behind Gaspee Point is a broad table land terminating in a bluff which overlooks a crescent shaped beach of splendid sand that stretches south for nearly a mile to the next cove—the same being named Occupaspatuxet. Across this cove the region is thickly populated, and the shore lots are almost wholly occupied for several miles.

Before long the same change is likely to come over this neighborhood of Riverview, Shawomet, and Longmeadow that has already taken place at Lakewood, Edgewood, and Pawtuxet Neck. The rapid transit and urban improvements will make this an all-year-round dwelling place.

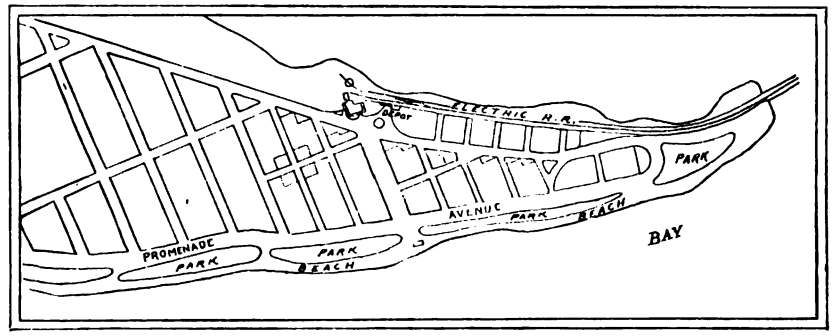
There are a few more vacant fields before Rocky Point is reached, but for the most part the land is already occupied at least marked for private dwelling places, and the same is true of Warwick Neck and all the shores of Greenwich bay as well as the eastern shores of the Narragansett to Bristol and beyond.

The day is not far distant for the withdrawal of all the privileges that the general public may have in any part of the shores of Narragansett bay, except those that may be taken into public control, for at least fifteen miles below the city upon either side.



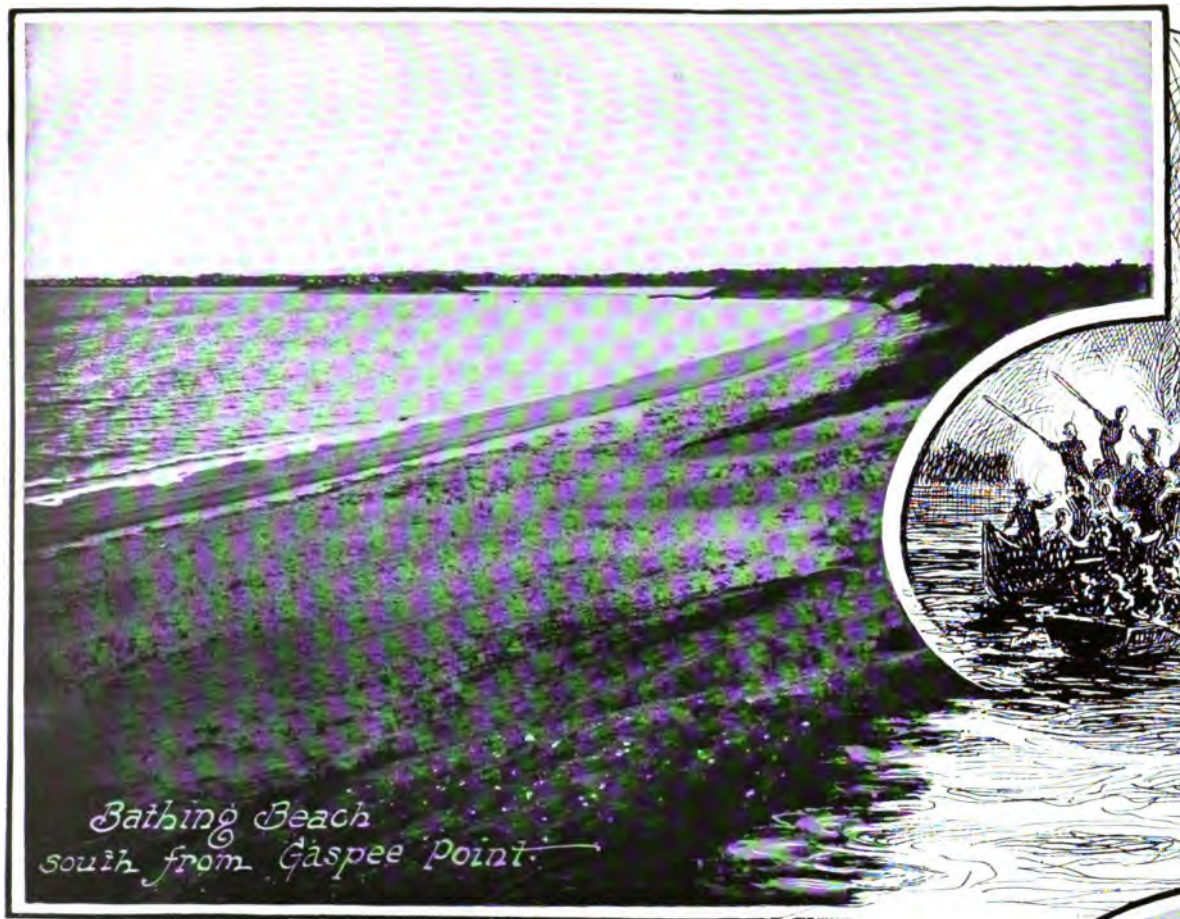
PLAN NO. 11. THE USUAL WAY. THE WATER FRONT SHUT OFF.

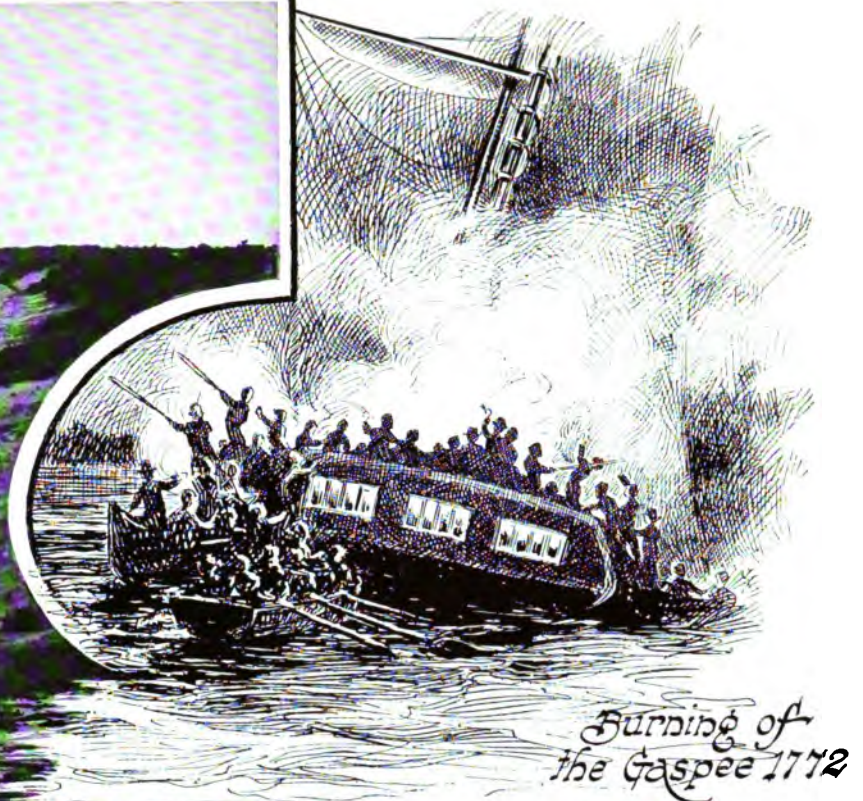
Notice the eccentric course of the "Main road" which leads from the city. There are many waste lots on the "Waterview Plat," caused by the slant of the railroad, which cuts most of the streets in two Access to the shore is denied except at the ends of a few streets, and it is a long journey from any part of the water front to any other. There ought to be a drive parallel with the shore giving public reservations between the roadway and the water, and streets parallel with the railroad tracks to connect the "dead ends" of present streets.



PLAN NO. 12. AN ADMIRABLE EXCEPTION. A PROMENADE ALONG THE SHORE.

Promenade avenue runs along the low bluff. The houses are all on the north side. The "parks" are strips of lawn with a few trees and occasional summer houses. "Promenade avenue" and the beach are, of course, the principal assets of this attractive settlement.





60. Gaspee Point.

Upon the whole of Narragansett Bay, there is now no public bathing place, but at Rock Island and Gaspee Point remains the great opportunity for a public reservation combining the delights of unspoiled nature for every summer pastime.

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PUBLIC LANDS AVAILABLE FOR PARKS.

In various parts of the Metropolitan District are public holdings belonging to the cities of Providence, Pawtucket and Central Falls that were originally acquired by the water or sewer departments. They are extremely useful features of the Metropolitan Park System and their use as such would not interfere with their other purposes.

OWNED BY THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE.

PAWTUXET FALLS PARK.—(Illustration, front of book.)—About twelve acres are owned by the city of Providence at Pawtuxet. This holding includes the falls of the Pawtuxet river and the land bordering the river just west of the bridge. The property upon the Cranston side contains about eleven and a half acres and extends along the shore for about one-third of a mile toward the houses of the canoe clubs. In addition to the very beautiful river bank, is a broad piece of upland well suited to a play-ground, from which a fine view of the valley is obtained. On the Warwick side the holding is limited to about half an acre. These properties front on Broad street and are lined with low and shabby buildings for which the city obtains a small rental that is barely enough to pay the taxes.

A fine opportunity for a small but very beautiful park is presented here. If the property should be turned over to the Park Association until such time as it could be incorporated into the metropolitan park system, the saving of taxes would allow the revenue from the Broad street buildings to be applied to the making of a few walks and a driveway from the street. Steps should immediately be taken to prevent vandalism and injury to the fine trees.

PETTACONSET PARK.—Several miles above Pawtuxet is the property containing the city pumping stations and the new filtration beds. The land surrounding them is finely wooded and picturesquely adapted for park purposes, and the elaborate works of the city water department interfere in no way with such use.

Above this property, which contains 126.40 acres and extends along the river for nearly a mile, there is land owned by the State. A strip along both banks above the water works extending all the way to Pontiac should be publicly controlled to guard the water supply against future pollution and preserve the stream banks in all their natural beauty.

SOCKANOSSET HILL AND FRUIT HILL.—At Sockanosset Hill and Fruit Hill the land around the city reservoirs is available for park use and from both of these heights beautiful and far spreading views are obtainable. Sockanosset Park, which adjoins the grounds of the State institutions in Cranston, contains, including the reservoir, 127.9 acres, and has a large area of fine woodland.

With the growth of the city southward it will form an important link in a line of public reservations extending between the Pawtuxet Valley and that part of the metropolitan park system near Knightsville and Meshanticut. The new avenue which is to be laid out from this reservoir to the Cranston Print Works district goes through undeveloped land and should be treated as a boulevard.

There are 30.37 acres in the city's property at Fruit Hill, which it is hoped to reach from Providence via the new "Pleasant Valley Parkway," and from Pawtucket, via Stump Hill.

STUMP HILL.—Adjoining the Pawtucket reservoir in Lincoln is a beautiful piece of woodland of 22 acres, which was purchased by the city of Providence some years ago as a site for a possible reservoir. The highest point of this land is 305 feet above tide water, and commands a splendid view over the entire metropolitan district and far down the bay. The grove should be protected from vandalism.

FIELD'S POINT.—The city owns a tract containing 88.5 acres, including Field's Point and extending from Allens avenue to the Providence river. This is the only piece of land upon the tide water shores of the State, north of Quonset Point, that is owned by the public. The extensive precipitation works and pumping station of the sewer department are located here, but the rest of the property is well adapted for the purpose of a marine park, and a portion of it at present is leased for a well-known shore resort.

Most unfortunately, the city does not own the commanding height which contains the historic ramparts of Fort Independence, with its glorious views of the bay and of the busy harbor of Providence. The pickaxe brigade and the steam shovel are not as easily frightened away as were the invaders of 1775 and an attack from the rear may reduce the fort and hill on which it stands, with very little delay, unless the patriotic defenders of the people's welfare rally to its defense and preservation.

The removal of three houses opposite the Broad street entrance of Roger Williams Park would open the way for the long contemplated boulevard which, for more years than parks have existed in Providence, it has been vaguely understood would sometime be built.

Besides these places, the city of Providence owns several tracts of land, including those on Richardson street, in the south end, and on Cypress street on Constitution Hill, which it has recently decided to dedicate for small parks and playgrounds.

OWNED BY THE CITY OF PAWTUCKET.

RESERVOIR HEIGHTS.—Pawtucket owns 15.9 acres on Reservoir Heights, surrounding and including Stump Hill reservoir, and adjoining the land owned by the city of Providence. The outlook from the reservoir is far-reaching and grand, suggestive of that from Neutaconkanut Hill, which it slightly exceeds in height. Though not counted as a park, it has long served the purposes of one, and in the plans proposed would form an attractive part of the extensive forest reservation of Lincoln Woods.

THE FILTER BED AREA, which also contains 15.9 acres, would come within the proposed Moshassuck Fens Park. It is very close to the new park recently acquired by the city of Providence on Cemetery street and the public holdings should be extended to include all of this low and marshy valley which may best be reclaimed by park methods. A short distance to the northwest of the Pawtucket Filter beds there is an UNNAMED PARK, extending from the Moshassuck river to Smithfield avenue, bounded on its northern edge by Grotto avenue and on the south by St. Francis Cemetery. It contains about 55 acres of very attractive hills and valleys and a beautiful little lake, and adjoins a thickly built mill district on the east. Upon the west, a good residence neighborhood is rapidly developing. It is an admirable place for a park and far from any other at present existing. No improvements have as yet been made and but few are needed, but there should be adequate protection to prevent further damage by fire.

ABOVE THE PUMPING STATIONS, along the shores of Happy Hollow Pond, Robin Hollow Pond, and Abbott's Run, Pawtucket must guard its water supply. Public ownership of the shores of these waterways seems to be necessary for this purpose, and the recent purchase of one large tract of land is a step in the right direction.

The hillside woods that adorn the watershed must be preserved in order to provide a sufficient supply of water through dry times, and a large forest reservation in the town of Cumberland will sometime come into being for this purpose if for no other.

THE CITY OF CENTRAL FALLS

possesses 31 acres known as the filter bed area and partly used in connection with the sewer system. This is mostly level and rather swampy land of the Moshassuck Valley, southwest of Lonsdale avenue, but there is a well wooded peninsula jutting sharply into the valley. Portions of the land are already much used for recreation and games.

MUNICIPAL ECONOMY AND PUBLIC RESERVATIONS.

Shoo Fly Village, Long Pond, and the Brook Street District.

There have been several costly projects undertaken in Providence which indicate the wisdom of withdrawing from ordinary occupancy many of the kinds of picturesque places proposed in the park system.

Shoo-Fly Village.

Many of the side hills offer never-ending sources of expense and trouble for land that is not worth the cost of improvement. A case in point is that of the land along the railroad track between the Broadway and Atwell's avenue bridges. A high sandy bank overlooked the tracks near the latter street, then curved away so as to have a little bay of flat land at the railroad level. This in time became filled with cheap cottages, perhaps forty or fifty of them all told.

To reach this little village the way led over the tracks from Harris avenue, which is just across the railroad. When it became necessary to abolish the grade crossing a new approach from somewhere was called for, but this meant a long graded street cut down alongside the bank from the top of the bluff, and supported by great retaining walls of concrete. On the top of the bank a line of tenement houses was also to be supported, lest they topple over the edge.

This work is now completed and it has probably cost no more than such a work would of necessity demand. The houses have all been raised and the place vastly improved. The newspapers, however, in several illustrated articles remarked that the expense would probably be greater than the entire valuation of all the land and houses at the bottom and top of the bank. This belief was well justified. The appropriation for the work was $100,000. The assessed valuation of all the property affected, and after all the improvements have been made, according to the tax book for October, 1905, amounted to $77,160.

Wherefore, the query rises: Why do it all? It were cheaper to condemn all the property affected and allow it to be used as a public playground with an open terrace on the top. The bank was not too steep to be traversed by pedestrians even though it could not serve for streets, and a stairway would not cost much.

The eminent landscape architect, Mr. Cleveland, who laid out the older part of Roger Williams Park more than 20 years ago, saw the possibilities of this terrace as a feature of much attractiveness, and suggested a utilization that would have improved the character of the whole neighborhood for many blocks. The cost of the land prevented the suggestion from meeting with the necessary support, but now since a much greater cost has been undertaken merely to save the property for its present use, we may easily see which plan would have been the more economical.

61. LONG POND IN 1904. A MELANCHOLY FRAGMENT AND A PUBLIC NUISANCE.

As an object lesson in ponds, we have the case of Long Pond in the Elmwood section.

Long Pond.

It is now reduced to a melancholy fragment and a public nuisance. During the score of years that the filling has gone on, a once attractive neighborhood has suffered from arrested development. The valuation of a very large district has decreased. The character of all the surrounding neighborhood has permanently deteriorated. The smoke of burning rubbish is forever in the air, and the scraps from a thousand waste baskets are borne on every breeze, until even Elmwood avenue is full of them sometimes. Few buildings have been erected on the made land and most of them are as poor and shabby as might have been expected.

Then there was the case of the Brook street district. A neighborhood of hills

The Brook Street District.

and valleys of much irregularity had been covered with hovels perched along the winding lanes. When building first began the land was not sufficiently valuable to pay for grading it. The result was the gradual transformation of a piece of territory that had originally been picturesque into a slum that was squalid and ugly.

Something had to be done to improve it, so the city set to work, in 1873, upon a task that must have looked pretty big for those days. The land and the houses were bought or condemned, and the district was graded into more conventional contour. The cost

was $1,285,238.20. Then the city set out to sell the land again. Tweny years afterwards, the official report stated that the total receipts had been $475,846.56, and that the city still held land valued at $57,064. The net cost was $752,327.64.

The Obvious Economy.

There are "Brook street districts" all about the city whose histories are just beginning. It would cost little to set them aside for public reservations that would be useful and beautiful. On the other hand, it would cost millions to transform them into anything that would be even decent and respectable after they get to be congested slums, and the result, while it might be sanitary, would never be over attractive.

Money for Destructive Purposes.

Providence has had many warnings of the evil of delay. A few years ago, about 300 acres of Neutaconkanut hill could have been bought for $45,000. The city was not too poor to buy it, for under the single "*Ordinance to remove the underbrush in the extension of Roger Williams Park*" it expended $57,000 upon the destruction of all the beautiful natural shrubbery. The land now included in the addition to Davis Park was offered for about $16,000 at the time the rest of the park was purchased. It was later bought for $36,000. Similar unhappy results of delay will be remembered in connection with Tockwotten and Hayward parks, and the State capitol grounds.—*H. A. B. in Prov. Sunday Journal.*

TIME TO GROW INTELLIGENTLY.

"Boston has until lately grown in a most accidental and hap-hazard way. It has cost the city more to undo mistakes perpetuated through the short-sightedness of former generations than it has to provide for its legitimate growth. It is, therefore, time for it to grow intelligently."—*Mass. House Report Metropolitan Park Commission.*

PUBLIC SHOULD GAIN THE ENHANCED VALUATION.

"If we were not hampered in civic improvements by unfortunate laws, we could go ahead with much greater ease than we can at present. I refer, of course, to that serious impediment to all civic improvement,—the inability of a city to 'take' the lands adjoining the part to be improved. If we are to improve the banks of the rivers, for Heaven's sake let us buy up a strip on each side of the river one-eighth of a mile wide, and let the enhanced value of it go to the benefit of the whole community."—*Frank Miles Day.*

"By recent act of the Ohio Legislature, cities are empowered to acquire land contiguous to public buildings and parks and to re-sell such land, *with restriction* in the deed of sale as to the character of the buildings to be erected thereon, for the purpose of protecting such public buildings and parks."—*Cleveland Report on Group Plan,* 1904.

PARKS AND LAND VALUES.

"PARKS ENCOURAGE BETTER BUILDING AND BRING MORE REVENUE TO THE CITY."

Parks as Investments.

Park lands are everywhere a good investment for the tax payers; the expense will be returned to the city treasury in many ways. Parks make the people more contented. They draw capital from abroad to build up manufacturing industries, and constantly increase the strength and profit of commerce.—*Andrew Cowan, Louisville.*

In Chicago.

Mr. W. H. Harmon, secretary of the Chicago Park Department, reports regarding the effect of parks upon the value of adjacent land: "The immediate effect was to double and quadruple the valuation of property. The establishment of park areas has invariably enhanced the real estate value of contiguous property."

In Boston.

The Boston Park Board in 1890 said in their report: "Present indications justify the opinion, expressed in the earlier report of the board, that the establishment of public parks will have the tendency to lessen the rate of taxation instead of increasing it." The opinion has been still more strikingly justified since the report of 1890.

John A. Pettigrew, superintendent of the Boston park system, writes: "The cost of the land taken for the Back Bay Fens averaged about twelve cents per foot; the cost of improving the site brings the present cost of the land up to fifty-two cents per square foot, while the adjoining land is selling at three dollars to five dollars per foot. The cost of Franklin Park land averaged with improvements, about fifteen cents per foot, while land adjoining will bring from fifty cents to a dollar per foot. The same result is shown in the case of the whole park system."

In San Francisco.

The San Francisco Department reports: "Thirty years ago, the land of the Golden Gate Park was purchased for the sum of $800,000. The value to-day is in the neighborhood of $11,000,000. The increased value of the land around Golden Gate Park has paid for the reservation ten fold. Improvements in the small parks have resulted in a much better class of surrounding buildings. Improved parks encourage better building and in consequence more revenue to the city, a more healthful people, and a decreased death rate."

In New York and Brooklyn.

"From 1856 to 1881, the taxable value of three wards in New York, in which Central Park was located, advanced 1,200 per cent., contributing one-third of the expenses of the whole city while the other nineteen wards increased but two fold." Similarly, Prospect Park in Brooklyn is declared to have been a most profitable source of revenue to the city. In Buffalo, "It has lightened the burden of the tax-payers."

In Baltimore and Savannah.

The same is true of Baltimore, and even in Savannah the establishment of the small parks "had the effect of doubling the value of adjacent property."

In Albany.

"The experience of every city proves that parks are not only an asset, but a good investment. The history of Albany is that the ground contiguous to the parks has not only doubled but quadrupled and sextupled."—*Wm. S. Egerton.*

Essex County Park Report.

"That the prompt acquirement of a comprehensive system of parks is desirable, if not imperative for the health and prosperity of the people, appears to be generally admitted."

"Whatever adds to its attractiveness as a place of residence means advantage to every one of its industries, to every business enterprise carried on within its boundaries."

Beacon Parkway in Brookline.

The secretary of the Park Board of Brookline, Mass., writes thus of improvement of Beacon street: "Beacon street was widened into a parkway at a cost of $615,000. In six years the increase in assessed values of land on either side of the street, throughout its entire length, and for an approximate distance of only five hundred feet from the side line, is $4,330,000, with no allowance for any increase in personal estate incident thereto. The Beacon parkway is, therefore, paying for itself long before its most zealous advocates thought it would, and is a striking proof that well-considered plans for large public improvements of this kind are profitable ventures."

Oklahoma is Beginning Right.

Even in the new little city of Guthrie, Oklahoma, the Commercial Club unanimously passed a resolution saying that "Beautiful parks are invaluable to modern cities, both from utilitarian and æsthetic points of view, and every city should take personal interest. . . . in the formation of a park and boulevard commission."

BUSINESS ADVANTAGES OF PARKS.

Parks increase the taxable valuation so as to more than pay for their creation. They attract well-to-do citizens; they stimulate permanent investments and the building of fine estates, and develop unbuilt areas. Public improvements are emulated in private construction. The well-to-do build better houses and pay taxes on a greater valuation.

Of course, attractions of this kind advertise a city; attract the regular shopping trade of a larger circle, and bring tourists, excursions, and conventions, thereby helping in a material degree all stores, theatres, hotels, cafes, public carriages, and many other business enterprises.

The reputation for attractiveness is worth much money.

Advantages of Parkways.

The advantages of connecting parkways or "Shoestring Parks" have been summarized thus: They aid in the development of real estate; they provide useful highways and increase pleasure driving; they unify the park system, giving each part the advantages of all; they have incidental value in many cases by joining the various arms of the State road system which has its natural centre in the metropolitan district; they are of value for local transportation; they provide many miles of avenues of assured beauty for the builders of the better class of residences and join the "dead ends" of streets that run toward the edges of bluffs and pond and river shores. Our own Metropolitan district is now sadly lacking in broad and attractive avenues of any considerable length, and if, as has been said, the people of Providence are waiting by the hundreds for places of assured attractiveness on which to build, the owners of undeveloped land should be glad of an opportunity to donate the necessary strips for a parkway system, and all other citizens should be glad to encourage their enterprise.

PARKS AS INVESTMENTS.

BY L. E. HOLDEN, CLEVELAND.

Parks opened and maintained at public expense, for the health, happiness, and common welfare, are of recent creation, especially in this country. Even that most ancient park, the Boston Common, owes its origin to the need of the community for a cow pasture. It was the merest accident that it was preserved.

The parks of the Old World were mostly the gifts of kings and princes; the parks of the New World, while some have been given by eminent and generous-hearted men, have mostly been created by the people demanding free air, light, and, as far as possible, the pleasures of country life and scenery near their homes in cities.

In 1856 I first visited Central Park. I remember its condition then very well,—how far out in the country it seemed, and how few people were in it. Work was going on for the improvement of its roads in a very small way. There were at that time people who sneered at the rocks and ravines and Olmsted's park scheme. Some said it was only an elephant in the hands of the city, others objected to the park commissioners who voluntarily gave their time to the unfolding and completion of the park system. Now there is no one so poor, no one so low, in all the great city of New York, as to condemn Central Park. The people own it, the people enjoy it, the people love it, rich and poor alike. Those were great prophets of the people,—those art engineers who built and planted for the future.

Little squares, like those found in Philadelphia, laid out by William Penn, were the only parks, except Boston Common, known in America until A. J. Downing, of New York, in 1850, began to write on the subject of parks. He suggested Central Park; his idea was endorsed by the mayor of the city, and in 1853 an act was passed setting

aside the site. Within the memory of many, Central Park was a wilderness of rocks and ravines and springs, a dwelling place of squatters, around whose cabins were clothes-lines filled with red shirts, tattered linen, and patched coats, and a thousand and one things from goats to donkey carts;—dilapidated wagons, as well as dilapidated men and women. Now it is a thing of beauty; it is a joy for all the people.

A Creator of Values.

Its influence on surrounding property has been the marvel of the age. Magnificent houses; towering apartment buildings; hotels that surpass anything in all the rest of the world, have been erected there until the property adjacent to Central Park, and not very far distant therefrom, has an assessable value greater than all New York in 1850 when the park was first proposed. Central Park of New York has been a creator of values.

Fairmount Park in Philadelphia was originally purchased to preserve the waters of the Schuykill from pollution. It contains 2,740 acres, and is one of the largest parks in the world. It is difficult to tell just what the influence of this great park has been upon the property around it, but a fair estimate will place the increase at over 300 per cent.

Regarding Parkways.

A modern and distinguishing feature is the idea of parkways laid out with the express idea of being trunk lines or approaches to the parks. This is especially noticeable in Paris, which has more than 120 miles of these avenues from 100 to 300 feet wide.

The boulevards and parks surrounding the city of Chicago afford a single drive of over forty miles and have increased the value of land from 300 to 500 per cent.

My personal observation, backed up by reports of different park commissions, and from men on whose judgment I depend, leads me to make this statement, that the conversion of lands to parks and boulevards has increased the value of surrounding property, in all of our cities where this has been carried out, from 300 to 500 per cent. Every roadway that is opened, made pleasantly passable, connecting the business centres of a city with its park system will increase the value of the property in the suburbs and along the lines of these roadways 300 per cent., and will add to the taxable value when these improvements are made and the lands adjacent are built up, as they will be, from five to ten times the present taxable valuation of the property.

Prosperity Depends Upon Vitality of Labor.

'Upon the health, happiness and well-being of the laboring classes must depend no small proportion of the future prosperity of the city. With parks and playgrounds within easy reach, the vitality of every man, woman and child who labors will be increased and his potentiality in every way enhanced."—H. P. Kelsey *in Report on Improvement of Columbia, S. C.*

"A city that does not acknowledge the necessity for public parks, as a means for promoting the welfare and happiness of its people, and recognize the substantial advantages that follow the making of a city attractive and comfortable as a place of residence, is not progressing but is already on the wane."—Andrew Cowan.

MORAL INFLUENCE OF PARKS.

"MORE PARKS, A MORE HEALTHY PEOPLE AND A DECREASED DEATH RATE."

Chicago has perhaps made the most striking pictorial exhibit to prove that parks and playgrounds are the nurseries for the development of useful citizens. Mr. A. W. O'Neill, secretary of the special park commission, has prepared diagrams showing by their shading how squalor, degradation, crime, and infant mortality increase in ratio just as the distance increases from the park lands. "Prevention of disease and juvenile crime follows the establishment of accessible pleasure grounds. It is imperative that playgrounds and parks should be so placed that no one could live more than one-half mile from some one of them."

From Chicago Reports.

"The corner gangs, through the influence of playgrounds, have become the athletic gangs of the neighborhood. The surplus of animal spirits is no longer apparent in juvenile turbulence, vandalism, and petty thefts, but in athletic and gymnastic competition. Mothers realize that they can send their children early in the morning to these playgrounds and find them in the evening safe and well behaved. They learn to respect property rights. They realize quickly that the playgrounds are their own, that vandalism and the desire to destroy is a hurt to themselves, and consequently they support the directors in protecting property. While the boys and girls find pleasure and recreation in these grounds, they lay the foundations for good citizenship and respect for law and order, and appreciation of the value of public property.

The attendance now amounts to more than a million a year. Most of the grounds are open the entire year, the centre spaces being flooded in winter and converted into skating rinks." . . . . . .

From San Francisco Report.

"The moral influence of parks, especially with provisions for recreation, is very great. The tired workman, who after the day's labor needs repose and the relaxation of home, is apt to be driven from it by the close atmosphere of the house and the street in which he lives. He would, if he could, get into the fresh air of the country, but as he can not do this, he seeks the relief which other excitements yield. He would seek an attractive park as instinctively as the plant stretches toward the light. Deprived of these, he and his are educated into the ways of disease and vice by the character of their surroundings." . . . . . .

"Parks and open spaces are a kind of charity which can not demoralize and can not be abused or jobbed."

INFLUENCE ON THE CHARACTER OF CHILDREN.

BY H. W. S. CLEVELAND, CHICAGO.

It is the duty of those in authority to provide recreation grounds of sufficient size within walking distance for every child in the city.

There is a responsibility that we have no right to shirk. We point to our free schools and the obligation of every parent to send his children to them unless his means enable him to educate them by a more costly method, but can any doubt the necessity of parks in the education of children who are born and bred in the crowded tenement houses which are the so-called homes of thousands of the inhabitants of every city?

I was first led to reflect on the subject many years ago by observing a man who was leading a cow in the streets of New York. As she passed that classic locality known as Five Points, a shout was raised by the host of little gutter snipes who swarmed the street and trooped after her with wonder and delight. It seemed to me to have a deep significance. "Here," said I to myself, "are thousands of children whose lives are passed amid the scenes of squalor and vice. They have never seen anything more attractive, and the sight of a cow being led quietly through the streets is to them an amazing novelty.

"Every one of those wretched little rag-a-muffins is growing up either to be a blessing or a curse to the community. He may prove a benefactor to his race, or he may become a thief or a murderer. Is it not a peremptory duty devolving upon us to let him see that life has something better to offer him than such misery as is his daily lot?"

PARKS AS EDUCATORS.

BY L. E. HOLDEN, CLEVELAND.

Parks are priceless sanitariums to the poor, who may go from dark and dingy rooms into verdure and sunlight free of cost. Parks and boulevards bring the country to city people where wearied energies may be recuperated. No matter how many luxuries may be packed inside of walls, unless there is a surrounding of God's free air, life is no life. City life is artificial, unnatural. Its greatest alleviations are parks and parkways. I want cheap transportation, open and free roadways, so that he who can not afford to ride a wheel or a horse may have as near as possible free access to the parks. I would have music there, and art, and all as free as possible, never forgetting that foul air prompts to vice, and oxygen to virtue, as surely as sunlight paints the flowers. I have been especially impressed with the loving care of people in Europe,—the poorer

people,—for the parks; for the shrubbery; for the trees, and for the flowers. You neversee them break the shrubbery or steal the flowers. It is that kind of education that we want here in American cities.

The parks are great civilizers; they make life worth more to every man, woman, and child. Whichever way you turn, whether from an economic standpoint or from that of health or pleasure, the hand of every citizen should be lifted in favor of the parks.

In all of our great cities there are men of large means who question how, at the close of life, their accumulations may be left so as to do the most good to their fellow-men. There are many great-hearted, grand-minded men whose attention once turned to the value of parks as educators, would willingly either give or purchase lands for the people of the cities where they have made their fortunes. Certainly nothing is as undying as the name of a man associated with a large public park near or in a great city. It is as enduring as the land itself, it falls from year to year into the minds of children, and by them is it borne down from generation to generation, and the donor's name is linked with the park which he has made the heritage of the people for all time to come.

FINE SCENERY PROFITABLE.

BY CHARLES ELIOT.

Within the district covered by the investigations of the Metropolitan Park Commission, a dozen supremely delightful places have been destroyed within the last few years. . . . Such spots of beauty as escape the destroyer are fenced in for private gain or pleasure.

How long can we afford to allow the finest of nature's pictures to be thus blotted out from the surroundings of life?

Here is the business aspect of the question: Who wants to visit any resort where all the seashore or such other scenery as there may be in the neighborhood is owned and occupied by private citizens? . . .

Would not every estate owner be the richer if it were possible for him to have access at any time to every finest spot in the neighborhood? . . . The bookstores are filled with books in praise of the beauty of nature, and the picture galleries are full of pictures thereof. Meanwhile, we are destroying and losing every day the real picture which the Almighty painted. (The above, written in relation to the shores near Boston, has an equal appropriateness for our own valuable asset of Narragansett bay. *H. A. B.*)

FROM THE MEDICAL STANDPOINT.

"*Resolved*, that the Rhode Island Medical Society, believing that open spaces and recreation grounds promote the physical and moral welfare of the community and play an important part in preventive medicine, heartily approves and supports the project to establish a metropolitan park system."—*Rhode Island Medical Society.*

AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION.

Parsimony for Parks; Generosity for Prisons, Asylums, Hospitals and Cemeteries.

The Chicago diagrams showing the relation of the park lands to the prevention of degradation, and the destruction of disease, make it interesting to consider the annual cost to our own city and state brought about by the herding of the population.

Fresh air and outdoor exercise bring destruction alike to the germs of crime and disease. Yet the appropriations for maintenance of public parks are insignificant compared with the outlay for hospitals and reformatories. The State spends annually upon its hospitals and reformatories in Cranston alone nearly $350,000. It cost millions of dollars to provide these and similar institutions, and other millions have been and will be expended by the cities and by philanthropic societies and individuals.

Parks Diminish Crime and Disease.

The total expenditure for the maintenance of all the parks within the great Metropolitan District of Providence Plantations is less than the annual cost of the Wallum Pond Sanatorium and most of those who look upon an outlay of $200,000 for new playgrounds and an important parkway in Providence as a vast and wasteful expenditure, would never think of other public institutions with the same spirit of parsimony.

The total area of all the parks in the Metropolitan District is 867.46 acres, which is only about a third of that belonging to cemeteries, reformatory institutions, hospitals, and other public or semi-public enterprises, and the cost of maintaining the parks is probably not more than a twentieth as much as the other institutions annually require.

For some astonishing reason we begrudge any expenditure that has to do with giving pleasure to those fitted to receive it, or with maintaining the health and strength of those who are not yet afflicted. We save our generosity until misfortunes, many of which might have been averted, have come upon the people.

Prevention less Costly than Cure.

Splendid open grounds surround all of the great public institutions of the State, and the inmates, whether they are prisoners or patients, are wisely given much open air exercise and employment. Yet these very things are almost always inadequately provided, and often wholly denied, to those who have not yet become criminals or mental wrecks, or victims of disease.

Upon the hills of Cranston dwell thousands of unfortunates in the custody or under the kindly care of the State, and no one in these days would think of confining them within city walls, but to most of them mental or moral oblivion has already come, and the rescue is now quite hopeless whatever the surroundings.

In the northwest corner of Rhode Island, where a great pine forest guards a lovely lake, the State has recently established a splendid sanatorium for its people who are

afflicted with tuberculosis. Tuberculosis may be vanquished through the medium of outdoor exercise and life in the unpolluted air, and the time may come when this hitherto unconquered monster will cease its ravages upon the human race. A simple remedy surely, but it took ages to discover it. Now the Great White Plague is losing much of its terror, and despair and death give way to hope and strength and life when foul air and stuffy rooms are left behind.

Certainly no taxpayer would begrudge the money for the splendid purposes of the Wallum Pond Sanatorium, yet for the rescue of the comparatively few (for the capacity is but one hundred patients at a time) the State must annually pay an amount equal to the interest upon a complete chain of parklands and great sanatoriums of nature, extending around the homes of three hundred and sixty thousand people and preventing the very beginnings of disease to thousands upon thousands of its inhabitants.

As to Insanity.

Upon the wooded bluffs above the Seekonk is the noble estate of Butler Hospital, and its director has written that "the lack of parks and absence of sweetness and light are potent causes of insanity," and that "the private parks surrounding all modern asylums are the most effective and the most necessary of all agencies for the cure of mental diseases."

Adjoining Butler Hospital grounds are two great cemeteries that combine with much beauty of location and environment, all that is best in landscape art. For years these were almost the only "show places" of Providence, and it used to be said that the "only attractive drives led either to an insane asylum or to a cemetery."

Why not Beauty for the Living.

Our citizens have ever been generous in their provision for the mentally afflicted, and have shown proper reverence for those who have passed away, but why should not provision be made to avert fatal calamity before it comes upon the people, and why should we believe that the only ones who may dwell amid beautiful surroundings are the silent inhabitants of the city of the dead?

Parks Cost less than Hospitals.

Our parklands are established for the joy of the living and for the happiness and relaxation of the ever increasing hordes of the tenement districts and the great workshops, and their cost is insignificant compared with the estates that have been acquired for the care of the afflicted and the cure of the morally perverted.

But why should we not show regard for the living as well as for the dead? Why should not heed be given to the cry from the tenements before their dwellers have need for the hospitals? May not a little part of what the prisons cost be used to provide scenes of sweetness and beauty for the rising generation instead of dismal surroundings of squalor and ugliness and degradation?

And if, as we know, "nothing costs a city like disease," is it wise to begrudge a little outlay for an ounce of prevention while we willingly provide so many pounds of cure?

H. A. Barker.

PLAN FOR A "CIVIC CENTRE."

In the possession of Exchange Place and City Hall Park, the city of Providence has undoubtedly secured a railroad approach at present unsurpassed in America. The fine city hall faces the new post office, now building at the other end of the great plaza, while along the northern side is the beautiful sloping park with the Bajnotti fountain, and just beyond, extending the whole length, is the new Union Passenger station, not wholly beautiful, perhaps, but admirably designed to meet the problems of its busy existence.

In the rear of the station great possibilities exist for the worthy completion of a splendid "civic centre." The three large tracts of weed-covered land marked C, D, and E upon the small plan (No. 13) have been dedicated by the city council for the purposes of a public garden. Beyond is the gentle eminence of Capitol Hill. To the left, the splendid Normal School overlooks an extensive garden, which occupies the site of some ugly foundries and the old State prison. On the opposite side of Francis street, in place of the disreputable slums that once bordered the edge of the cove, the State House now lifts its magnificent dome against the sky. To the east is the attractively varied sky line of College Hill, crowned by the old University, and on the west, broad streets on either side of the Woonasquatucket furnish the opportunity previously described for reaching the outer park system and the hitherto neglected northwest corner of the city.

The present layout of streets, however, is awkward, and the whole aspect of things behind the station is incongruous and inharmonious. The State House grounds and those of the Normal School,—which should be happily blended,—are clashingly at variance. In view of the millions of dollars that have been spent, and the great value of the land, this region should surely be brought into some semblance of symmetry.

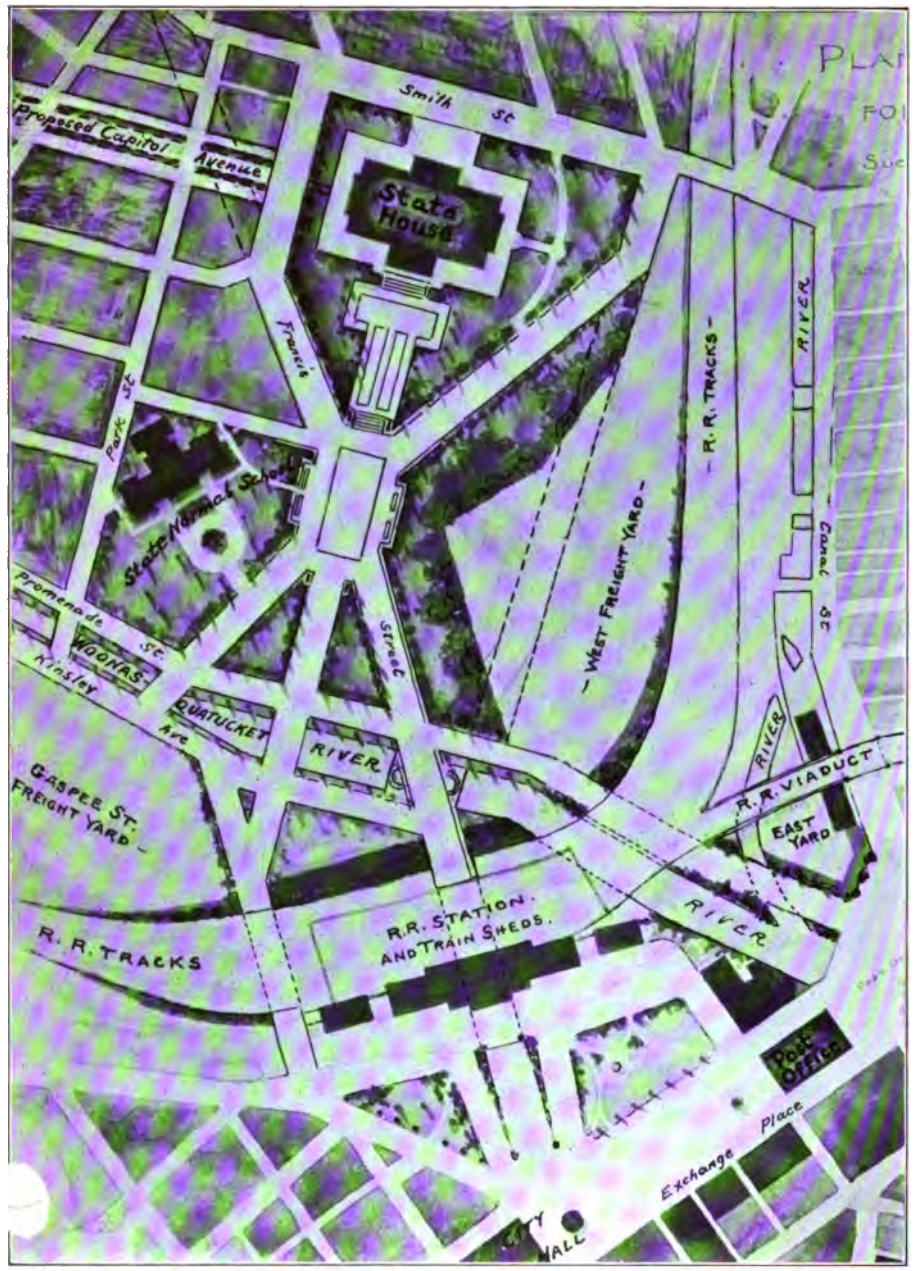
Almost all of the arrangements hitherto suggested call for the removal of the obtrusive corner at least, of the "West Freight Yard" that extends almost into the dooryard of the capitol. The latest drawing, however (plan No. 14), recently worked out by the Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, concedes the existence of this for a time, as a necessary evil, and strives to make it as little obnoxious as possible.

The particularly striking feature of the plan is the continuation of the Mall leading down from the front entrance of the State House by a fine and dignified avenue extending beyond Francis street, and across the river to the present Gaspee street viaduct.

As in most of the other plans, there is a "focal point" in the line of Francis street, from which the different streets and walks diverge, and whether this shall take the form of a circle or a rectangle, something of the sort appears necessary to harmonize the existing angles and give character to the whole.

PLAN NO. 13. THE CENTRE OF PROVIDENCE.

A. State House and grounds.
B. State Normal School and garden.
C. D. E. City lots dedicated as "Public Garden."
F. F. F. Freight Yards, N. Y., N. H. & H. R. R.
G. G. R. R. Viaducts and Embankments.
H. Union Passenger Station.
I. City Hall. J. New Post Office.
K. Central Fire Station.
L. L. City Hall Park.
M. Exchange Place.
N. Post Office Square.
O. Market Square.
P. Crawford Square.
Q. Brown University.
R. R. R. Rivers. (Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck join north of Post Office Square, forming Providence River.)



PLAN NO. 14. PLAN FOR IMPROVING STREETS AND PUBLIC PROPERTY NORTH OF UNION STATION, PROVIDENCE.

Proposed by R. I. Chapter, American Institute of Architects, 1906.

The striking feature is the avenue leading toward the State House from the Gaspee street viaduct, at west end of the Union Station.

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

JANUARY SESSION, A. D. 1904.

AN ACT APPOINTING METROPOLITAN PARK COMMISSIONERS.

[Enacted by the General Assembly November 15, 1904.]

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

SECTION 1. The chairman of the park commissioners of the city of Providence, the mayors of the cities of Providence, Pawtucket, and Central Falls, the president of the town councils of the towns of East Providence, Cranston, Warwick, Johnston, North Providence, and Lincoln, the president of Brown University, the president of the Chamber of Commerce of Providence, the director of the Rhode Island School of Design, the president of the Providence Art Club, together with Augustine Jones, Alfred Stone, Amasa M. Eaton, Henry A. Barker, and John R. Freeman, representing the Public Park Association, are hereby appointed Metropolitan Park Commissioners, and shall hold office for one year. It shall be their duty to consider the advisability of laying out ample open spaces for the use of the public in Providence and in the cities and towns in its vicinity, and they shall have authority to make maps and plans of such spaces and to collect such other information in relation thereto as they may deem expedient, and they shall report to the next general assembly at its session in January, 1905, a comprehensive plan for laying out, acquiring and maintaining such open spaces.

SEC. 2. Said commission may employ such assistants as it may deem necessary, and may expend not over one thousand dollars therefor and in the discharge of its duties, payable out of any money not otherwise appropriated upon the written orders of an executive committee of three persons, to be chosen by said commissioners from among their own number. Said commissioners shall receive no compensation.

SEC. 3. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

JANUARY SESSION, A. D. 1905.

AN ACT TO CONTINUE THE METROPOLITAN PARK COMMISSIONERS.

[Enacted at January Session 1905.]

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

SECTION 1. The metropolitan park commissioners appointed under chapter 1204 of the Public Laws are hereby continued for the purpose of continuing and completing the duty specified in such chapter.

SEC. 2. Said commission may employ such assistants as it may deem necessary, and may expend not over two thousand dollars therefor and in the discharge of its duties, payable, out of any money not otherwise appropriated, upon the written orders of an executive committee of three persons to be chosen by said commissioners from among their own number. Said commissioners shall receive no compensation.

SEC. 3. The jurisdiction and powers of said commissioners shall extend to and may be exercised in the cities of Providence, Pawtucket, and Central Falls; the towns of East Providence, Cranston, Warwick, Johnston, North Providence, Lincoln, Barrington, and the voting districts Nos. 3, 4, and 5 in the town of Cumberland, which cities, towns, and voting districts shall constitute the Metropolitan Park District of Providence Plantations.

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